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## Senate

(Legislative day of Tuesday, September 21, 2021)

The Senate met at 10 a.m., on the expiration of the recess, and was called to order by the Honorable BEN RAY LUJÁN, a Senator from the State of New Mexico.

### PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal God, whose plans stand firm forever, You test the motives of our hearts. Today, give our lawmakers such ethical consistency that their motives will remain pure. May love for You become the dominant motivation for all they think, say, and do.

As they strive to live according to Your precepts, fill their hearts with songs of gratitude. Lord, remind them that this day is a gift from You, so they should rejoice because of the blessing of another sunrise.

We pray in Your generous Name. Amen.

### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Presiding Officer led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

### APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,  
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,

Washington, DC, September 22, 2021.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby

appoint the Honorable BEN RAY LUJÁN, a Senator from the State of New Mexico, to perform the duties of the Chair.

PATRICK J. LEAHY,  
President pro tempore.

Mr. LUJÁN thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

### RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

### MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

### RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

### DEBT CEILING

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, yesterday evening, the House of Representatives approved a continuing resolution that will keep the government open through December, provide emergency funding for Afghan refugees and Americans affected by natural disasters, and suspend the debt ceiling through the end of 2022.

The bill now comes to the Senate, where both parties must pass it together to steer the United States away from a number of fast-approaching crises. Absent congressional action, the government will shut down in just over a week. The United States could face a first-ever default soon thereafter, and

it will be American families who will suffer most.

Now our Republican colleagues say they don't want a shutdown. They say they don't want a credit default. They say they want hurricane aid. Then they should vote yes on this bill.

You want to avoid a default, Republican colleagues? Vote yes.

You want to avoid a government shutdown? Vote yes.

You want to provide hurricane aid? Vote yes.

You want to help the Afghan refugees? Vote yes.

That is the bill that will be on the floor. Those who will vote yes will vote to avoid default, to avoid a government shutdown.

Those who vote no will be saying: We are OK with default and we are OK with a government shutdown.

To say, "Do it another way," that doesn't cut it. This is what is on the floor. This is what the House passed. And, again, the kind of sophistry that we have heard from the Republican leader doesn't make any sense, either through past history or through practicality and what we need today.

At the end of the day, it is how we vote that matters most. Our constituents sent us here to vote, plain and simple. So Republicans face a choice. Vote yes to pay our bills and keep the government open; or vote no, which means you are OK with default and a government shutdown.

Every single Democrat will support this bill. Whether or not we avoid default is simply entirely up to the Republican Senators. It is up to them, plain and simple.

The President has the proposal. The House has passed the proposal. I will put that proposal on the Senate floor.

And remember, this is not just a political fight. The last time Republicans played with the debt ceiling in 2011, the credit of the United States was downgraded for the first time ever. And all

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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indications are that if Republicans succeed in causing a default this time around, the consequences will be catastrophic.

According to a sobering new analysis by Mark Zandi at Moody's Analytics, a default would erase up to 6 million jobs in the economy. It would cause unemployment, which we have worked so hard to bring down during this COVID season, to spike up again to as much as 9 percent. And as much as \$15 trillion of household wealth will be wiped out of existence. Every American family will suffer from the Republican desire to play political games and send our Nation into default.

Let me say that again: \$15 trillion of household wealth. And that means thousands of dollars for each family—for many families—thousands.

That is not fair. All for the sake, Leader MCCONNELL, of a political gain. Political gain. It is an incomprehensible number. I can't think of a worse gut punch to the American people who spent the last 19 months fighting against the COVID-19 pandemic than to see their life savings disappear because Republicans won't pay the bills and are simply trying to gain mere political advantage.

There is no scenario on God's green Earth where it is worth risking 6 million jobs, 9 percent unemployment, and \$15 trillion of household wealth just to stick it to your political opponents. But that seems to be the MO these days of the Republican leader: not caring at all about the American people and what matters to them and playing political games in an effort—I believe a futile effort—to gain political advantage.

It won't succeed. Everyone knows who is doing what around here.

So, over the past few weeks, Republicans have advanced a number of dishonest and duplicitous arguments to rationalize their opposition to the debt ceiling, to play political games that the minority leader is involved in.

I expect we will be hearing these arguments over and over again, so let's set the record straight on two of their main points.

First, our Republican colleagues have argued that raising the debt ceiling should exclusively be the domain of one party when it controls all three branches of government. Of course, this is nonsense.

Since 1960, the debt ceiling has been raised about 80 times under both unified and divided government.

As recently as 2017, Leader MCCONNELL, as majority leader, put forward a bill to raise the debt ceiling when there was a Republican President, a Republican Senate, and a Republican House; urged Democrats to join him.

And, of course, we did because it is the right thing to do. We don't want to hurt the American people. We don't want to play games with the livelihood of Americans the way the Republican leader seems to revel in doing. And rather than play political games and

rather than engage in an ill-considered game of chicken, Democrats worked with the other side.

Second and even far more dishonest, Republicans say they don't want to raise the debt ceiling because they don't want to clear the way for more domestic spending. This statement is false, pure and simple.

Our proposal to suspend the debt ceiling is not about future spending. Raising the debt ceiling is about paying the bills that have already been racked up. The proposal the House sent over is designed to help pay for the \$908 billion that we approved last year in the depths of the COVID crisis.

That legislation was drafted by Republicans, voted for by Republicans, put on the floor by Leader MCCONNELL, and signed by a Republican President. It is the Trump debt—the Trump debt—that we now must pay.

For Republicans, after voting for it, after going back to their districts and claiming credit for some of the things in that bill, to now decide they have changed their minds and they don't want to pay the debt that they willingly took on and brag about the spending that incurred that debt is the height of irresponsibility and the height of hypocrisy. It is a dine-and-dash of unprecedented proportions. And if they have their way, it is going to be the American people who will foot the bill.

The full faith and credit isn't a game. It is the bedrock upon which our economy stands. No lawmaker can vote to refuse to pay the bills and then say they have the best interests of the American people in mind.

So, again, here is what is on the line with this vote: the well-being of tens of millions of Americans—everyone from small business owners, homeowners, veterans, Active Duty military, Social Security beneficiaries, and American consumers everywhere.

And Senator WARNER has made a very good point. If we default or even if the risk of coming close to default raises interest rates by 1 percent, that will cost the government more—more than some of the spending programs—many of the spending programs that the Republicans say they don't like, even though they voted for it.

There is a very simple answer to avoiding this entire problem. When the CR comes to the floor, Republicans vote yes and put this needless crisis to an end. But if they choose to vote in favor of default by a cynical political blame game, it will ultimately be the American people who will pay the price. And the American people will know who did this—the Republican Senate. Because there will be a proposal by the Democratic President, the bill will pass the floor, and Democrats and Republicans will each have to vote yes or no, simply put, on whether we want to default.

## NOMINATIONS

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, now on nominations. Last night, I filed cloture on seven nominations that have, to date, been tied up by Republican obstructionists.

These individuals will play a critical role in advancing U.S. diplomacy across the globe, from Europe to East Asia to Africa. One will be tasked with international narcotics law enforcement; another will advise on military affairs.

These are not controversial nominees. Quite the contrary, they were all reported out of committee with overwhelming bipartisan support and would normally be confirmed by this Chamber without much fuss.

Now a few on the other side have decided they are going to hold these critical nominations hostage for the sake of scoring political points with the far right. It is a sort of a manic dash, who can be the most irresponsible to please the far right of people who seem to be interested in running for President in 2024.

They want to drag out what should be an easy process, wasting the Chamber's time and energy and hindering the government's ability to protect American interests.

The Republicans who are delaying the confirmation of these nominees are deliberately making the American people less safe just so they can try to enhance their political fortunes, which, in my judgment, if there is any gain, it will be short term and the loss of doing this will be much greater to them.

Everyone here knows what is really going on, but despite Republican obstruction this week, we are going to make sure these important nominees are confirmed by the Senate. I hope we can come to an agreement to ultimately move them quickly through this Chamber, but either way, we are going to stay here until these nominees have been confirmed.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

## RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Republican leader is recognized.

## FOREIGN RELATIONS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, this morning, I had the honor to meet with Prime Minister Johnson of the United Kingdom, and later today, I will meet

with Prime Minister Morrison of Australia as well. Any day Congress has the opportunity to strengthen working relationships with two of our Nation's closest friends and allies is a good day indeed.

Our meetings today come at a time when our most important trans-Atlantic and trans-Pacific alliances are facing growing threats to collective security and to prosperity.

In the face of Russia's meddling, China's expansionism, a rekindled War on Terror, and further threats to democracy and human rights around the world, the steady leadership of committed partners is more crucial than ever. So I specifically wanted to thank our friends in Australia and the United Kingdom for their years of loyal friendship that have underpinned coalition operations in Afghanistan and our joint efforts elsewhere to check the most pressing threats to our nations and to the kind of world that will help us thrive.

I will be reaffirming my own commitment that America must be the reliable, committed, and globally engaged ally that our closest friends deserve.

#### ECONOMIC RECOVERY

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, now on another matter, over the past several months, American families have had to contend with a historic amount of painful, painful inflation. This summer, we saw the prices for core personal consumption soar at the fastest pace in nearly 30 years. Last month, the Producer Price Index notched its steepest year-on-year jump in more than a decade. All across the country, across the economy, families and businesses are being hit hard.

One measure of construction materials is reporting that homebuilders are facing materials costs that are 22 percent higher than just last year—22 percent higher than just last year. Homeowners and renters are approaching a fall and winter in which heating costs are projected to reach a 13-year high. Eighty-six percent of respondents told one recent poll they were either “extremely” or “very worried” about inflation.

Now, this is exactly what Republicans, independent experts, and even liberal economists warned would happen if Democrats started ramming through massive, massive inflationary spending. Back in the springtime, Larry Summers, the top economic adviser to both President Clinton and President Obama, warned at the time that runaway spending could “set off inflationary pressures of a kind we have not seen in a generation.” And, of course, that is exactly what has happened.

Well, just ask any working family in this country about their last trip to the gas station, the grocery store, or the car dealership. Inflation has gotten so bad on Democrats' watch that it has wiped out every ounce of the average

American worker's pay growth during this economic recovery and then some. Annual real wage growth is negative even though employers have been handing out raises because—because—of inflation.

Remember, at the start of the year, working Americans had an economy that was teed up for a roaring recovery. So when Washington Democrats rolled out their first springtime spending spree, even the Washington Post cautioned that “the improving picture is raising questions about whether the stimulus bill is mismatched to the needs of the current moment.” That was the Washington Post on the so-called rescue package that passed back in March.

You might think that the disastrous consequences of Democrats' last spending binge for working Americans might give our colleagues some pause about the next one, but, alas, no such luck. Behind closed doors, they are putting together another, even more reckless taxing-and-spending spree. They want to take the last bill, which Democrats called the most leftwing law in American history, and actually dwarf even that.

Massive tax hikes on Americans that will hurt families and help China. Let me say that again. Massive tax hikes on Americans that will hurt families and help China. A socialist transformation that nobody voted for last year. Another invitation for even more painful inflation that will hit working Americans right where it hurts. The American people don't want it, and Senate Republicans won't support it.

#### GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, now on a related matter, yesterday evening, Senator SHELBY and I introduced a continuing resolution that could pass the Senate and prevent a government shutdown. Our legislation would fund the government through December. It would restore the defensive assistance for our ally Israel that House Democrats stripped out to appease some of the worst elements of the far left.

As one frustrated Democratic Congressman stated yesterday, “A missile defense system [like] Iron Dome defends civilians from missiles. Hence the name. Only in a morally inverted universe would this be considered a ‘controversy.’” That is a House Democrat describing the action yesterday of House Democrats.

Our bill also removes the debt limit language that Democrats have known since July—since July—will not receive bipartisan support from Senate Republicans. As one of my colleagues put it succinctly, if Washington Democrats want to jam through trillions of dollars in reckless spending all by themselves, they can raise the debt limit all by themselves. If they want to do one, they will need to do the other. To do one, if they need to do one, they will do the other. It is that simple.

#### BORDER SECURITY

Mr. McCONNELL. Now, one final matter. The American people are watching a terrible sight unfold down on our southern border. Many thousands of people, largely from Haiti, are literally huddled together underneath a bridge in Del Rio, TX, just across the Rio Grande. Temperatures have been in the triple digits. The conditions are unsanitary and inhumane.

This nightmare is the direct result of the leftwing policies and leftwing messages pushed by the Biden administration. They say their approach to immigration is the compassionate path, the one that reflects the soul of America. They are wrong. In no way does it honor America's soul or uphold American values to tolerate a major border security crisis and unending—unending—humanitarian disaster that appear to be permanent features of life under the Biden administration.

This false choice is the constant refrain from the left. Either we adopt Democratic policies that lure people into literal squalor and effectively open our borders in the middle of a pandemic or else we are somehow betraying the spirit of the Statue of Liberty? That is simply nonsense.

Legal, orderly immigration has been a proud strength of our country and a core pillar of the American way of life literally for generations. That is completely different than Washington Democrats sabotaging our border while publicly advertising a catalog—a catalog—of socialist benefits they say they will provide for illegal immigrants who manage to make it in.

When President Biden was sworn in, thousands and thousands of people took his far-left campaign rhetoric seriously and began streaming toward our borders. One person at the border directly told the Washington Post they came because they heard “President Biden was letting people in.”

First, in the springtime, his administration called this a seasonal surge. Well, so much for that. We have had more than 150,000 border apprehensions every single month for the past 6 months. Encounters usually fall off during the hot summer months, but on President Biden's watch, the opposite has happened.

Listen to one recent example of the chaos. A few days ago, the Biden administration filled a big bus with illegal immigrants from this encampment. The bus set out for somewhere else in Texas. But according to news reporting, partway through the journey, the illegal immigrants on board revolted, took control of the bus, and broke out. But more broadly, it sounds like catch-and-release may be the de facto Biden policy.

Just this morning, the Associated Press reports that according to government officials, “Haitian migrants camped in a . . . Texas border town are being released in the United States . . . on a very, very large scale . . . undercutting the Biden administration's

public statements that the thousands in the camp faced immediate expulsion."

Nobody believes Democrats that this lawlessness, chaos, and human suffering is the fair and compassionate way to govern our country. Nobody buys that. An average of recent surveys shows that only 36 percent—36 percent—of the country approves of President Biden's handling of immigration, while 56 percent disapprove.

Look, Americans know a train wreck when they see one. Our citizens deserve better than this failure—utter failure—of leadership, and so do the people Democrats are luring here with a mirage.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Senator THUNE and I be allowed to complete our remarks before the vote is taken.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### NOMINATION OF FLORENCE Y. PAN

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, this week, the Senate will vote on Florence Pan's nomination to the District Court for the District of Columbia.

She is highly qualified, with more than a decade of experience on the bench. If confirmed, she would be the first Asian-American woman to serve on that court.

She graduated summa cum laude from the University of Pennsylvania and received her law degree with distinction from Stanford.

After clerking on the Southern District of New York in the Second Circuit, she decided to pursue a legal career in public service. In 1995, she was selected for the prestigious Bristow fellowship in the Office of the Solicitor General. After completing her fellowship, she served as attorney in the Appellate Section of the Criminal Division of the Justice Department and senior advisor to the Department of the Treasury.

Beginning in 1999, Judge Pan worked as an assistant U.S. attorney for the District of Columbia for 10 years. In this role, she litigated local and Federal courts at the trial and appellate level.

In 2009, President Obama nominated her to serve on the DC Superior Court. She was confirmed with unanimous support by the Senate.

Years later, President Obama nominated her to serve on the DC district court, and her nomination was re-

ported out of the Republican-controlled Judiciary Committee by a voice vote. Unfortunately, she didn't receive a floor vote in time, though lawmakers on both sides of the aisle recognized that she was eminently qualified.

Since 2009, Judge Pan has presided over more than 650 trials: criminal cases, family court cases, civil cases. She was unanimously rated "well qualified" by the American Bar Association. She has the strong support of Congresswoman ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON, who submitted a statement for the record and described her as an exceptional nominee.

Last month, she was voted out of the Senate Judiciary Committee on a bipartisan vote of 18 to 4.

What is more, the historic nature of Judge Pan's nomination will help build a Federal bench that reflects full diversity.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting her.

#### CORONAVIRUS

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, less than 2 miles from this Capitol, there are 666,000 small white flags stretching across the National Mall like a sea of suffering and loss. Each of these flags represents an American life lost to COVID—666,000. Let me tell but one of them. Her name was Candace Ayers. She lived in my hometown of Springfield, IL.

Early last March, as soon as they could, Candace and her husband Terry received their second coronavirus vaccinations. That was a day of joy and relief for the family because Candace lived with rheumatoid arthritis, which weakened her immune system.

In July, she traveled to Mississippi—a State, sadly, with one of the lowest vaccination rates—to console a friend who had lost her husband. At the time, COVID infections were at a low point, and the Delta variant was just starting, so Candace thought she would be safe, having been vaccinated.

Soon after the trip, she tested positive for COVID. She was hospitalized and moved to an ICU, and she spent the last few weeks of her life on a ventilator.

She died on September 3 at the age of 66, leaving behind her husband, their son and daughter and 5-year-old triplet grandchildren.

In the obituary in my hometown paper, her family wrote: "She was vaccinated but was infected by others who chose not to be. The cost was her life."

I read that to my wife the morning it was printed and said I have never seen a sentence or two like that in any obituary.

Experts call what took Candace Ayers' life a "breakthrough" COVID infection, meaning an infection that occurs after an individual has been vaccinated. Breakthrough infections are typically mild, but can be devastating for immunocompromised people like Candace.

With the rise of the Delta variant, it is not just the elderly or immunocompromised who are at risk. Children made up only 3 percent of COVID cases at the start of this pandemic. Today, children account for 27 percent of new COVID infections, and the school year is just starting.

We are in the midst of yet another wave of this pandemic. COVID is once again overwhelming America's health system, and the rate of COVID infections and deaths are dramatically higher in the areas of lower vaccination.

An article in last Friday's Chicago Tribune tells the story in Illinois. Last Thursday was the fourth day in a row that every ICU bed in Southern Illinois was filled. In a 20-county area—home to 400,000 people—there were no ICU beds available.

Doctors, nurses, and first responders are working around the clock to care for sick patients, but after 18 grueling months, they are reaching a breaking point. And with our healthcare system pushed to the brink, everyone is feeling it.

If you live in Southern Illinois and you have a heart attack, a stroke, a serious accident, or a life-threatening condition, bad news: There are no ICU beds available for you. Hospital staffs in those areas have to call hospitals sometimes hundreds of miles away in Nashville, TN; St. Louis, MO; Kansas City, MO, to try to find a bed.

Compare the situation to Chicago, some 300 miles away but a world of difference. COVID infection rates are starting to decrease. Public health officials are hopeful they are finally turning a corner.

Why the great disparity between the Chicago regional area and Southern Illinois? One reason: vaccinations. In Chicago, two in three adults are fully vaccinated against COVID. In Southern Illinois, the figure is only one in three.

So much of the suffering and expense could be avoided if we could take the politics out of the COVID debate and stop the spread of misinformation that is literally killing people. As Candace Ayers' family would tell you, the most important thing is that more people get vaccinated. Vaccines are safe, effective, and free—and widely available to anyone over the age of 12.

Here is a statistic that should trouble everyone. The New York Times tracks COVID vaccinations around the world using figures supplied by national governments. Where do you suppose the United States of America ranks globally compared to other countries on vaccination rates? Well, you would guess the top three, right? The top 10 for sure. How about top 20? You would be wrong. Last week, the United States ranked 55th globally for the percentage of people vaccinated. We are just behind Cambodia.

And in the wealthiest Nation on Earth and in the country that led the research and development in finding these vaccines, that is sad; it is inexcusable; and it is deadly.

Now, listen, all Americans respect individual rights, but the only way to end the pandemic is for everyone to accept the personal responsibility for our shared well-being. That is why I support President Biden's recent action to strengthen America's defense against COVID and bring this pandemic finally to an end.

Many responsible employers, large and small, have already decided on their own to require that their workers get vaccinated. I encourage more to do it. A strong majority of Americans support this policy. President Biden's decision to extend that policy to much of the Federal workforce and to private employers with 100 or more workers means that two out of three American workers will be required to get vaccinated.

We even have a situation in the Federal Bureau of Prisons where the infection rate of Federal prisoners is six times the national average. Yet fewer than half of Federal prison guards have been vaccinated—fewer than half. That is inexcusable.

Other nations have already instituted policies which encourage vaccinations. It is time for us to do the same. If we are ever going to see this pandemic come to an end, kids get back in school, and life return to normal, more Americans have to roll up their sleeves and face the reality that vaccination is the pathway to that result.

Now, sadly, while this debate is going on nationally, politicians in two dozen States, with vaccination rates below the national average, are threatening to sue the Biden administration over its new COVID policy. In other words, these Governors are saying to the President: Stop any requirement for masks; stop any requirement for vaccinations. In the war against COVID, these lawmakers in these two dozen States are siding with the virus. Their actions, if they follow through on these threats, will result in more illness, more death, and more harm to the economy.

Now, how can I say that? Well, I will tell you how—by taking a look at the numbers. Take a look at the numbers from the 24 States threatening lawsuits. The infection rate is 3,471 for every 100,000 people. How about the other States that are not filing a lawsuit against President Biden? Coincidentally, COVID death rates in those 24 States where these attorneys general are threatening lawsuits against President Biden is 31 per 100,000. The COVID death rates in the rest of the country: 11 per 100,000.

Vaccination rate: 49 percent in those States, 57 percent in the States that are not suing the President. That tells a story.

They are exalting liberty over life. This notion that we don't have a responsibility to ourselves and our family and innocent people to step forward is exactly the point that was being made by Candace Ayers' family. We do.

We bear that responsibility, and we should accept it.

Since June, the average rates of COVID infections in the 24 States threatening to sue President Biden have been double the rates of COVID infection in the other 26 States. COVID death rates in those States have been nearly three times worse than the rest of the country. These reckless political actions have deadly, real-world consequences.

President Biden's actions are reasonable; they are necessary; and a majority of the American people believe it. Politicians hoping to gin up their base by suing the President should stop and start fighting the virus instead of the President's ambitions to bring this pandemic to an end. The sooner we do that, the sooner we can end this pandemic once and for all.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

## ELECTIONS

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, Federal takeovers are being discussed in both the House and the Senate this week. The Democrat leaders announced that the Senate will once again be taking up legislation to put the Federal Government, instead of the States, in charge of elections in this country. Meanwhile, over in the House of Representatives, they are expected to vote on legislation to eliminate essentially all State restrictions on abortion, no matter how modest or how widely supported.

So what is up with all of these Federal takeovers? Well, Democrats have been pushing election legislation—what they call H.R. 1, or the For the People Act—for multiple years now. This radical legislation would provide for a massive Federal takeover of our electoral system, chill free speech, and turn the Federal Election Commission, which is the primary enforcer of election law in this country, into a partisan body, among other dangerous measures.

And the reason—the reason for this radical legislation? Well, as even some Democrats have implicitly admitted, this legislation is designed to make it easier for Democrats to win elections.

Fast forward to last week. With H.R. 1 unable to pass the Senate, some Democrats produced a modified version of this legislation. It is called For the People Act “lite.”

And while I appreciate their efforts, unfortunately, as the Republican leader said yesterday morning, “This latest version is only a compromise in the

sense that the center left compromised with the far left,” or, as the Wall Street Journal editorial board put it this morning, “Calling this bill slimmed down . . . is like touting your healthy choices after you order a Diet Coke with four Big Macs.”

The For the People Act “lite” would still impose troubling new burdens on free speech; it would still undermine State voter ID laws; it would still spend taxpayer dollars on political campaigns; it would still make it easier for those here illegally to vote; and, most of all, it would still put Washington, not State governments, in charge of elections for no reason at all.

Let's be clear. There is absolutely zero reason to have the Federal Government start dictating States' election policies—zero reason. There is no systemic problem with State election laws, and State election officials do not need Washington bureaucrats dictating how many days of early voting they should offer or how they should manage mail-in ballots.

This bill, like its parent H.R. 1, is a solution in search of a crisis. States have been doing a fine job running elections. Even Democrats have sort of had to admit that given the huge voter turnout in the last election and the fact that Democrats won, albeit by the slimmest of margins—even Democrats have had to admit that States are doing a pretty good job running elections.

So now that they can no longer tell us that our electoral system is broken, Democrats are telling us that we need election legislation like this because States are passing legislation that will, Democrats claim, threaten election access—baloney. It is just another attempt to manufacture a crisis that will justify passing H.R. 1 or some variant.

Democrats are pushing election legislation for one simple reason: because they think it will improve their chances in future elections. That is not a good reason to bring up election legislation, and I will continue to oppose any Federal takeover of elections.

South Dakota election officials are doing just fine without having their every move dictated by Washington bureaucrats.

## ABORTION

Mr. THUNE. Meanwhile, Mr. President, over in the House, Members are expected to consider legislation that would, as I said, preempt virtually all State restrictions on abortion. Democrats are calling the bill the Women's Health Protection Act. A more accurate name might be the “abortion on demand act” or we could simply refer to it as what it is—probably the most anti-life legislation ever to be considered in the U.S. Congress.

This bill would eliminate pretty much any and every abortion restriction in every State across the country: parental notification laws, informed consent laws. Measures adopted by

States and upheld by the Supreme Court would disappear under Democrats' legislation. The bill would also prevent States from restricting any particular method of abortion, no matter how barbaric the method, and the bill would make it essentially impossible to impose any meaningful restrictions at all on abortion in any stage of pregnancy, including after the point of fetal viability, when the baby can survive outside its mother.

The bill would also jeopardize doctors' and nurses' right to refuse to participate in abortions and specifically prevent them from having recourse under the Religious Freedom Restoration Act to protect their conscience rights. It would put measures in place to ensure that any State pro-life law would face an uphill climb in the courtroom. In short, this legislation would make abortion on demand at any time, for essentially any reason, the law of the land in the United States.

I hope—I really do hope—that during debate on this measure the Democrats are not going to pretend that their proposed abortion law somehow represents the prevailing sentiment of the country—because it doesn't. The vast majority of Americans believe that there should be at least some restrictions on abortion.

Gallup has been polling on abortion for decades, and in all that time, the percentage of Americans who believe abortion should be legal under any circumstances has always remained under 35 percent. In fact, for most of the past several decades that number has remained squarely under 30 percent.

A strong majority of Americans support at least some restrictions on abortion. Furthermore, the Associated Press poll from this June found that 65 percent of Americans believe that abortion should generally be illegal in the second trimester, or from about 13 weeks of pregnancy, while a whopping 80 percent—80 percent—of Americans believe that abortion should generally be illegal in the third trimester.

And it is not surprising. Americans aren't dumb. And thanks to ultrasounds and scientific advances and plain old common sense, they know just how ridiculous it is to claim that unborn children are just blobs of tissue. Most people are well aware that an unborn baby with its own heartbeat and fingers and toes and DNA is, in fact, not a blob of tissue but a human being.

And most people believe that human beings deserve to be protected, even when they are small and weak and vulnerable—especially when they are small and weak and vulnerable. And so it doesn't surprise me in the least that 80 percent of the American people think abortion should generally be illegal in the third trimester, because I can't imagine anyone being comfortable with the idea of killing a baby who is not only, like any unborn baby, a human being worthy of protection, but who is actually old enough to survive outside of his or her mother.

And so, as I said, I really, really hope the Democrats are not going to pretend that they are representing the American people with this appalling legislation. They are not representing the American people. They are representing the radical abortion lobby, and the radical abortion lobby is terrified that, as it well knows, it does not have the majority of the American people on its side. And so it is relying on its Democrat allies to push for perhaps the most radical pro-abortion legislation ever considered.

The American people are better than this, and I would hope that the Democratic Party would be better than this. The Democratic Party has historically portrayed itself as the defender of the little guy. It is unfortunate that that doesn't extend to the littlest guys and girls among us: the unborn babies in danger of dying from abortion.

There are hundreds of thousands of abortions in the United States every year. That is hundreds of thousands of innocent human lives lost. Do we really need to remove even the most modest restrictions on abortion?

While, unfortunately, the vast majority of the Democratic Party is in the pocket of the radical abortion lobby, I hope that there are at least some—some House Democrats—out there who aren't comfortable with this bill in the Democratic Party's extreme abortion politics.

And I hope that these Democrats will stand up and oppose their party's abortion-on-demand legislation. This anti-life legislation is an abomination, and it should never, never make it out of the House of Representatives.

I yield the floor.

#### CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. REED). Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

#### CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 169, Lily Lawrence Batchelder, of Massachusetts, to be an Assistant Secretary of the Treasury.

Charles E. Schumer, Ron Wyden, Martin Heinrich, Alex Padilla, Margaret Wood Hassan, Raphael Warnock, Ben Ray Lujan, Gary C. Peters, Elizabeth Warren, Christopher Murphy, Patrick J. Leahy, Tammy Duckworth, Sheldon Whitehouse, Michael F. Bennet, Tim Kaine, Tammy Baldwin, Cory A. Booker.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Lily Lawrence Batchelder, of Massachusetts, to be an Assistant Secretary of the Treasury, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) is necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS).

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 63, nays 35, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 370 Leg.]

#### YEAS—63

Baldwin	Hassan	Portman
Bennet	Heinrich	Reed
Blumenthal	Hickenlooper	Romney
Blunt	Hirono	Rosen
Booker	Kaine	Sanders
Brown	Kelly	Schatz
Cantwell	King	Schumer
Cardin	Klobuchar	Shaheen
Carper	Leahy	Sinema
Casey	Lujan	Smith
Cassidy	Manchin	Stabenow
Collins	Markey	Tester
Coons	McConnell	Tillis
Cornyn	Menendez	Toomey
Cortez Masto	Merkley	Van Hollen
Crapo	Murkowski	Warner
Duckworth	Murphy	Warnock
Durbin	Murray	Warren
Gillibrand	Ossoff	Whitehouse
Graham	Padilla	Wyden
Grassley	Peters	Young

#### NAYS—35

Barrasso	Hagerty	Paul
Blackburn	Hawley	Risch
Boozman	Hoeven	Rubio
Braun	Hyde-Smith	Sasse
Burr	Inhofe	Scott (FL)
Capito	Johnson	Scott (SC)
Cotton	Kennedy	Shelby
Cramer	Lankford	Sullivan
Cruz	Lee	Thune
Daines	Lummis	Tuberville
Ernst	Marshall	Wicker
Fischer	Moran	

#### NOT VOTING—2

Feinstein Rounds

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. SMITH). On this vote, the yeas are 63, the nays are 35.

The motion is agreed to.

#### EXECUTIVE SESSION

#### EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The bill clerk read the nomination of Lily Lawrence Batchelder, of Massachusetts, to be an Assistant Secretary of the Treasury.

#### CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

#### CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 245, Jayme Ray White, of Washington, to be a Deputy United States Trade Representative (Western Hemisphere, Europe, the Middle East, Labor, and Environment), with the rank of Ambassador.

Charles E. Schumer, Catherine Cortez Masto, Gary C. Peters, Elizabeth Warren, Kirsten E. Gillibrand, Sheldon Whitehouse, Jeff Merkley, Christopher A. Coons, Patty Murray, Amy Klobuchar, Richard J. Durbin, Richard Blumenthal, Martin Heinrich, Jon Ossoff, Brian Schatz, Debbie Stabenow.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Jayme Ray White, of Washington, to be a Deputy United States Trade Representative (Western Hemisphere, Europe, the Middle East, Labor, and Environment), with the rank of Ambassador, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) is necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS).

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 78, nays 20, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 371 Ex.]

#### YEAS—78

Baldwin	Graham	Portman
Barrasso	Grassley	Reed
Bennet	Hassan	Risch
Blackburn	Heinrich	Romney
Blumenthal	Hickenlooper	Rosen
Blunt	Hirono	Sanders
Booker	Hoeven	Sasse
Brown	Kaine	Schatz
Burr	Kelly	Schumer
Cantwell	King	Scott (SC)
Capito	Klobuchar	Shaheen
Cardin	Leahy	Sinema
Carper	Lujan	Smith
Casey	Lummis	Stabenow
Cassidy	Manchin	Tester
Collins	Markey	Thune
Coons	McConnell	Tillis
Cornyn	Menendez	Toomey
Cortez Masto	Merkley	Van Hollen
Cramer	Moran	Warner
Crapo	Murkowski	Warnock
Duckworth	Murphy	Warren
Durbin	Murray	Whitehouse
Ernst	Ossoff	Wicker
Fischer	Padilla	Wyden
Gillibrand	Peters	Young

#### NAYS—20

Boozman	Hyde-Smith	Paul
Braun	Inhofe	Rubio
Cotton	Johnson	Scott (FL)
Cruz	Kennedy	Shelby
Daines	Lankford	Sullivan
Hagerty	Lee	Tuberville
Hawley	Marshall	

#### NOT VOTING—2

Feinstein Rounds

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HICKENLOOPER). The yeas are 78, the nays are 20.

The motion is agreed to.

#### EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Jayme Ray White, of Washington, to be a Deputy United States Trade Representative (Western Hemisphere, Europe, the Middle East, Labor, and Environment), with the Rank of Ambassador.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

#### UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that notwithstanding rule XXII, the votes in relation to the White and Pan nominations occur at 6:30 p.m. tonight.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, for the information of the Senate, there will be one rollcall vote at 2:45 p.m. today. That vote will be on the confirmation of the Batchelder nomination. There will be two rollcall votes at 6:30 p.m. tonight. Those will be on the confirmation of the White nomination and cloture on the Pan nomination.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### SOCIALISM

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, paraphrasing a philosopher of his era, Winston Churchill once said: Those that fail to learn from history are doomed to repeat it.

And I doubt that Churchill was the only one that said that. I think we quote other people saying similar things.

Now, Churchill was himself a devoted student to history. The research for his multivolume biography of his ancestor, John Churchill, first Duke of Marlborough, likely informed his strategic military thinking as Prime Minister during World War II.

Churchill was also a fierce critic of socialism in his time, and that is the main point of my remarks today—talking about socialism.

Socialism, as we know it today, is based on a different view of history than what Churchill had, a history that says we are headed in a particular direction, and you just need to see where it is heading to “be on the right side of history.”

Socialism was thought to be the wave of the future in Churchill's time, just as it was the wave of the future when Karl Marx was writing about it in the mid-1800s. In fact, a wave is an apt analogy for socialism. Enthusiasm for socialism has crested and then crashed down many, many times in the last couple of centuries.

Today, some enthusiasts are again riding high on this socialism wave. Some of them are too young to know better, while others simply refuse to learn the lessons from the previous crashes that socialism has shown us.

Given previous spectacular failures of full-fledged socialism in Eastern Europe, Latin America, Asia, and Africa, usually, as we learn, resulting in violence, in poverty, and, most importantly, suppression of individual rights that we value here in the United States, but also advocates of socialism find themselves on the defensive once again.

When asked why we should try a system that has repeatedly and spectacularly failed, a common fallback is to cite Sweden and other Nordic countries as examples that we should learn from.

It may surprise some of my colleagues here in the Senate that this is one point where I agree with the socialists. We should examine and learn from Sweden's experience. In fact, an excellent summary of Sweden's experience from the 1950s to this very day has been compiled by the Swedish economist Johan Norberg. His video, which goes by the title “Sweden: Lessons for America,” is available on YouTube as part of the Free to Choose Network. A short paper similarly titled, “Sweden's Lesson for America,” has been published by the Cato Institute.

So I would recommend to all of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle paying attention to either that video or that publication by Cato because we can learn a lot from Sweden, and it is not what people will be espousing here in the U.S. Senate based upon a lot of political speeches from those on the left.

As Norberg points out, by about 1950, Sweden was the fourth richest country in the world and had the fifth freest economy. In other words, Sweden became wealthy through economic freedom, like we have here in America. And then, you know what, Sweden started to adopt socialist policies.

At first, it was just a few welfare programs. But between 1960 and 1980, government spending in Sweden doubled from 31 percent of gross domestic product to 60 percent of gross domestic product, and, of course, that meant for all the people in Sweden to pay sky-high taxes.

This is the time period that older socialists remember so fondly and we see espoused here on the Senate floor. Sweden was surfing on top of the socialist wave and seemed to have it all: prosperity, massive government spending, and a highly regulated economy. However, even the best surfers cannot ride a wave forever. All waves eventually come crashing down. Sweden's socialist policies started to kill off the wealth creation that had made its economy the fourth richest in the world. That wealth economy was needed to fund all that government spending.

Norberg points out that Sweden was 10 percent richer than the G7 countries on a per-capita basis in 1970. But 25 years later, 1995, it was more than 10 percent poorer than those same G7 countries. During that time, not a single job was created in Sweden's private sector, and, more importantly, inflation took away almost all of the value

of any wage increases during that period of time in Sweden—just as we see since the first of the year, inflation eating away so the workers today in America do not have a real wage increase.

As Margaret Thatcher famously said, “The problem with socialism is that you eventually run out of other people’s money.”

One of the most iconic Swedish companies is Ikea. Its stores all around the world are painted the color of the Swedish flag. During Sweden’s experiment with socialism, Ikea moved to the Netherlands and is still headquartered there today. Things in Sweden had to change. And you know what? By the 1990s, Sweden realized its mistakes going the Big Government direction that they went and they reversed course.

Yes, it did elect a center-right government in the 1990s. But even more importantly, the leftwing Swedish socialist democrats also recognized their mistake.

Norberg quotes a Social Democrat Minister of Finance:

That whole thing with democratic socialism was absolutely impossible. It just didn’t work. There was no . . . way to go than market reform.

So, yes, let us learn from Sweden here in the U.S. Senate, as we are considering a \$4.2 trillion reconciliation package that builds more government programs and entitlement programs, that once you start them they never end—because we don’t have to go down the socialism road. That road is a dead end.

Yes, Sweden still has much higher government spending and a more extensive welfare state than we have in the United States, but in order to generate the wealth to pay for it, Sweden now has very pro-growth economic policies. Sweden doesn’t pretend that they can finance all that spending by taxing the rich, like you have constantly heard from the Democrat majority in both Houses of this Congress. In fact, Sweden’s tax code is much less progressive than the Federal Government’s Tax Code here in the United States. Most Swedish tax revenue comes from an income tax system flatter than ours and also from a consumption tax.

Norberg points out that the top 10 percent in Sweden pay less than 27 percent of the taxes; whereas, in the United States, the top 10 percent pay 45 percent of all the income in the Federal Government, and we are still hearing that they aren’t paying enough. And yet, from the other side, I never hear how much more than that 45 percent that segment of our economy should pay because maybe there are some people who believe it ought to be 100 percent.

Moreover, taxes on employers and capital are modest in Sweden to attract investment and remain competitive on our global stage. The Trump tax cuts finally made our corporate in-

come tax competitive with Sweden’s. Now they want to make the American corporate tax rate yet the highest in the world, where it was for a long period of time until 4 years ago.

That is right; the Trump tax cuts made corporate tax more like Sweden, but now the Democrats want to make it less competitive once again. That is right. I am talking about today’s Democrats and the Biden proposals. By doing so, they are making the mistake that Sweden made decades ago that they are now attempting to correct and has done so by restoring pro-growth policies.

As Norberg said, “You can have a big government, or you can make the rich pay for it all. You can’t have both.”

Everybody in Sweden—rich, middle class, and even lower income—pays high taxes. That is the deal the Swedes have made. If that is the deal Democrats are offering Americans, they should be honest instead of pretending it is possible to fund Swedish-style government here in the United States by spending through soaking the rich. They should explain that hard-working Americans will have to fork over close to half of their income to the government in return for the cradle-to-grave welfare state benefits. But I think they know that would be very, very unpopular here if that is where it ends up, like it did in Sweden between 1970 and 1995.

Now, the United States is not Sweden. Americans, who declared independence and fought our Revolutionary War over taxes, are, on the whole, much less tolerant of giving over their hard-earned dollars to the government to spend.

I would urge my colleagues across the aisle to learn the lessons from Sweden, including their counterparts on the center left in Sweden. Do not kill job creation. Do not kill wealth creation. Do not let soaring inflation steal the wages of American workers.

And if you want to look to Sweden, look to the Sweden of today, not the Sweden of 1980. Better yet, if you want a model in the region, look to Sweden’s dynamic neighbor across the Black Sea, Estonia. Its history has led it to be even more resistant to the failed, outdated ideology of socialism. Estonia has the most competitive tax code in the OECD and a fast-growing economy. No wonder it is pushing back on Biden’s administrative proposal for a global minimum tax. Our actions now will determine what kind of life our kids and grandkids will have in the future.

We ought to learn from history so we can shape a brighter future. History is clear that economic freedom is the ticket to broad prosperity and not socialism.

#### IOWA LAND PRICES

Mr. President, now I would turn to one other point. If anybody is waiting to speak, it is a little shorter than what I just stated.

I want to make it a priority—or I do make it a priority to keep in touch

with my Iowa constituents, 2.3 million of them. I listen to their thoughts and concerns. Now, that could be on my 99-county tour meetings that I hold every year for 41 years in a row now that I have been a Senator for Iowa, or it could be during the match-up of Iowa State versus my alma mater, Northern Iowa football. In either case, I meet with Iowans where they are and listen to what is on their mind.

During this past State work period, I had multiple conversations with farmers about what is on their minds. At the UNI-Iowa State game, I had a conversation with a friend but also a fellow farmer, Ron Heck. He farms near Perry, IA, where he talked to me at this football game about concerns about President Biden’s tax plan.

Ron followed up with an email to me, which I want to share with my colleagues on the floor since this is a theme that I have consistently heard across the State.

At the end of my speech, Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that this email be printed in the RECORD.

I am going to refer to parts of that email, but I think you ought to hear it directly from Ron Heck, so that will be at the end. Just read it.

Here is my summation of it. Ron started the email by saying:

Iowa farmers have a problem with exploding land prices, coupled with Biden’s increasing death and transfer taxes.

But to quote further:

A . . . tax at death or transfer can’t be paid back by younger working farm families. Young Iowa farmers would become feudal servants to banks and landlords from outside the state.

There are many clichés and articles written about this. I have seen some that don’t seem to grasp the problem.

For those who didn’t grasp the problem that these taxes might cause, Ron highlighted some key statistics on the lack of available Iowa farmland. You understand, God only made so much farmland.

Quoting again:

. . . in Iowa, from the third quarter of 2020 through the second quarter of 2021, CARD [the Center for Agricultural Rural Development] at ISU [Iowa State University] says 181,046 acres of Iowa farmland has been “available on the market.” Out of about 30 million crop acres, this is 0.6% in a year. Everyone knows that it might be 100 years before any one parcel is available again, so “you need to buy it now” is always said by the auctioneer. A Des Moines Register article on June 28, 2018, by Donelle Eller says that only “7% of Iowa farmland (owners) intend to sell to a non-family member.”

Ron made this point to show that public auction prices are high because of the scarcity of available farmland for sale. These prices should not be used for family tax-transfer valuations for taxation. But, of course, they would be under some of these ideas coming out of the White House.

Ron continued with facts on the price of this farmland:

Outsiders believe the value is there, but in fact, farm families don’t want to sell, so the auction price goes up.

Ron said that, in August, there were 40 Iowa farmland auctions, with most of the sales between \$10,000 to \$16,000 an acre.

Assuming a “taxable” gain of \$10,000 per acre, Biden’s taxes could be \$4,400 per acre.

Ron told me that, “At a minimum, this would be a \$200 per acre cash rent for 22 years to the U.S. Government, all payable in advance.”

He added: “This is ‘confiscation, not taxation.’”

Ron said: “. . . since the \$4,400 must be paid for in after tax dollars, it would actually take double this amount to pay it back. Interest charges could make the payback period more than 50 years, just to pay the U.S. taxes.”

Ron finished his email by saying:

It doesn’t take much outside money to raise havoc with Iowa farmland auctions, and therefore estate or transfer taxes will ultimately destroy Iowa’s farm culture.

Ron, thanks for taking time to write to me so I can tell your story to my colleagues in the U.S. Senate. It is my job to respond to comments and do something about it.

I want to urge my colleagues to join together and oppose changes that will impact family farmers and small businesses, generally. Most importantly, of those families which we were just told in Ron’s statistics, 93 percent of the farmers want to pass it on to the next generation. That might be true of small businesses as well.

These Iowa farmers, just like farmers around the country, feed and fuel our country and the world. Only 2 percent of the people in this country provide food for the other 98 percent. Ensuring that the next generation of farmers are able to keep the land in their family is in our national interest.

If you want to preserve the family farm, then you can’t let it be taken away by these Biden tax proposals. These tax-and-spend proposals will be bad for small business, for farmers, and for all Iowans.

Mr. President, at this point I ask unanimous consent that the entire email from Ron Heck be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

Jennifer, you and I have not met. I talked to Senator Grassley at the ISU/UNI football game last week. He asked me to send an email to you about our conversation. He will recognize my name.

Iowa farmers have a problem with exploding land prices, coupled with Biden’s increasing death and transfer taxes. As the Senator said to me, the result is “confiscation, not taxation”. A 44% tax at death or transfer can’t be paid back by younger working farm families. Young Iowa farmers would become feudal servants to banks and landlords from outside of the state.

There are many clichés and articles written about this. I have seen some that don’t seem to grasp the problem, and some that are pretty good. I’ll do some math about Iowa grain farmers that might be helpful. I know the Senator doesn’t need to be convinced that the proposed taxes are wrong. He might find some of this useful:

In the last year in Iowa, from the third quarter of 2020 through the second quarter of 2021, CARD at ISU says 181,046 acres of Iowa farmland has been “available on the market”. Out of about 30 million crop acres, this is 0.6% in a year. Everyone knows that it might be a 100 years before any one parcel is available again, so “you need to buy it now” is always said by the auctioneer. A Des Moines Register article from June 28, 2018, by Donelle Eller says that only “7% of Iowa farmland (owners) intend to sell to a non-family member”. POINT: Public auction prices are artificially high because of scarcity and should not be used for family tax transfer valuations for taxation. Outsiders believe the value is there, but in fact, farm families don’t want to sell, so the auction price goes up.

Forty current Iowa auction prices from Aug 20 to Aug 27 were from \$7400 to \$22,600. The \$22,600 included a wind turbine that was bring in about \$400/acre in payments, so that one doesn’t count. Still, most of them were \$10,000 to \$16,000. Assuming a “taxable” gain of \$10,000 per acre. Biden’s taxes could be \$4,400 per acre. At a minimum, this would be a \$200 per acre cash rent for 22 years to the US government, all payable in advance. This is “confiscation, not taxation”. Actually, since the \$4,400 must be paid for in after tax dollars, it would actually take double this amount to pay it back. Interest charges could make the payback period more than 50 years, just to pay the US taxes.

Farmdoc from the University of Illinois has many articles showing the return to land and the farmer. They include crop and government revenue, and subtract all costs except rent and family living. The number is variable, but usually the landlord and tenant have about \$300 to split as they choose. Iowa State has similar numbers, but Illinois has a better presentation.

So, if farmers can’t pay these prices, doesn’t this all work out with lower land prices? Nope. For one thing, there is a boom and bust in Iowa land prices about every 50 years (1930, 1980, 2030?). Booms, or bubbles, are caused by a bad combination of money, credit, and attitude. What could be the problem now? Of course one is the cheap and easy credit. With 10 year T-bill rates around 1%, and everyone “knows” you can’t lose money on farm land, a \$240 cash rent on \$16,000 land at first glance is a 1.5% return. Everyone “knows” that government programs guarantee that farmers will pay the rent (have you seen the movie “The Big Short” about the housing bust?).

What about an outside billionaire getting excited about carbon sequestration, or getting nervous about the stock market? The 181,046 auctioned Iowa acres last year if they were \$14,000 per acre would have been \$2.5 billion dollars. Bill Gates is now the largest farmland owner in the US. Back to my point: it doesn’t take much outside money to raise havoc with Iowa farmland auctions, and therefore estate or transfer taxes, and ultimately destroy Iowa’s farm culture.

Mr. GRASSLEY. I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. ERNST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### THE ECONOMY

Ms. ERNST. Mr. President, Democrats in Washington are playing a high-stakes game with our Nation’s fi-

nances. Congress just keeps passing bill after bill that adds trillions of dollars in spending to Washington’s credit card.

First, there was the \$1.9 trillion “Bidenomics” stimulus bill that fanned the flames of inflation and paid people not to work. Then there was the \$1.2 trillion so-called infrastructure bill that was supposed to be entirely paid for, but wasn’t. And now the \$3.5 trillion budget blueprint that paves the way for passing a wish list of progressive priorities, like the Green New Deal and other pricey partisan pet projects.

You might think the reckless spending spree would have come to a stop after reaching the Nation’s debt limit in July. Wrong.

The Democrats are now plotting to suspend the debt limit in order to pass what would be the most expensive bill ever passed by Congress.

This reckless borrowing and spending is driving up the prices of everyday goods as well as our national debt and, if Democrats have their way, the taxes of hard-working Americans, too. With the Federal fiscal year ending in mere days, another trillion-dollar spending bill will probably be rushed through at the last minute to avoid a government shutdown because Congress put off doing its work on time yet again.

The Democrats have their hands full with multiple financial crises, all of their own making, and their solution to each of these is the same—to spend more money we don’t have—which only confounds the underlying problems. More spending results in higher taxes, increased prices, and even more debt.

The scenario reminds me of this popular meme of a guy playing UNO, in which the whole aim of the game is to rid your hand of all of your cards. I love this game. I played it as a little girl at my grandma’s house. I played UNO with all of my cousins.

OK. So, in the meme, he is seen holding a wildcard that presents him with a choice: Perform an action—in this version, to “cut unnecessary spending”—or draw another 25 cards from the deck and, most certainly, lose the game.

In the next frame, the man, who represents the Democrats here, is holding a handful of cards because he would rather do anything but what the card actually suggests.

Unfortunately, the consequences of dealing with Washington’s budget are much more dire than losing a game of UNO. Instead of drawing cards, the Democrats are selecting to borrow more to finance totally unnecessary and completely indefensible—and often bizarre—expenditures rather than simply cutting waste out of the budget.

Just like you can’t win UNO without getting rid of the cards in your hand, we will never get control of our debt until we discard the waste in Washington’s bloated budget. It may sound a bit oversimplified, but it isn’t. To demonstrate the point, I brought my own deck of cards with me today.

OK. So these are UNO cards, all right? Every one of these cards lists a current government expenditure and its cost to the taxpayers. Each represents a real choice Congress will make in the coming days. In each scenario, the Democrats are likely to choose taxing and borrowing to pay for the spending rather than to trim the unneeded expenditure. So let's pick a card, any card, and see if that is a good deal for the taxpayers.

So let's see. UNO card No. 1: "Cut the pork or draw 25."

After a decades-long moratorium on congressional earmarks, the House of Representatives has revived the corrupt practice of earmarking tax dollars for politicians' pet projects. More than 3,300 earmarks, consisting of \$9.3 billion, have been proposed by Members of Congress just this year, which includes purchasing Santa gifts in Indiana and building fish markets in the Virgin Islands. We could save billions by pulling pork off the menu, but the Democrats are going to go with the drawing of 25 more cards instead.

OK, let's try another one. OK.

"End welfare for politicians or draw 25."

Every year, millions of taxpayer dollars are diverted into a special account that exists solely to subsidize the campaigns of politicians running for President. The program has doled out more than \$1.6 billion for parties and politicians to date, and there is currently \$400 million sitting in the account. We could save the \$400 million by pulling the plug on this welfare program for politicians, but, once again, the Democrats will choose to draw 25 more cards.

OK. The next card: "Put the brakes on boondoggles or draw 25."

Washington continues to bail out transit boondoggles across the country that are billions of dollars over budget and decades behind schedule, like, of course, folks, the San Francisco Bay Area subway extension to Silicon Valley, California's high-speed rail project, and Honolulu's elevated rail line. The Democrats are proposing \$10 billion more to support the high-speed rail projects alone. We could save tens of billions of dollars by canceling these gravy trains that are taking taxpayers for a ride, but you can probably guess what the Democrats' play will ultimately be: to draw 25.

So, folks, let's lay the cards on the table. The Democrats' borrowing-based budgeting is a real house of cards because you simply can't borrow your way out of debt. The bills will eventually come due in the form of higher taxes and drastic cuts to government services, and it will be the taxpayers who get lost in the shuffle. Because the Democrats control both Chambers of Congress and the White House, it may seem that the deck is stacked against our taxpayers, but I have a card up my sleeve.

Folks, let's put it in reverse and go in a different direction. Instead of just

throwing in the cards and going along with the Democrats' demand to borrow another penny, let's first go through the budget, line by line, and determine what is a priority and what isn't.

It is time to make Washington start living within a realistic budget, just like every other family in America is expected to do. That may be a wild idea to the big spenders in DC, but taxpayers know that is how to play your cards right. So, instead of picking up more debt, let's skip—let's skip—the spending that isn't needed until we are sure Washington isn't wasting a single dollar.

UNO.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. ROSEN). The Senator from Florida.

(The remarks of Mr. SCOTT of Florida pertaining to the introduction of S. 2809 are printed in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

Mr. SCOTT of Florida. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri.

Mr. BLUNT. Madam President, obviously, when you look at what needs to be done in the fall and, frankly, if you look at what needs to be done in the next few weeks, there are important items ahead of us.

One of them that my colleague from Florida just did a good job talking about is setting the debt limit for how much Federal Government debt should the country be able to tolerate.

One way to do this is to set a limit. Another way that some of my colleagues appear to really prefer is just to set a date and say we are going to postpone any limit until that date, and we will just see what happens. We will see how deep the debt gets between now and then. But we really don't want to talk about a limit, and when you look at what that limit is likely to be, you would understand why you wouldn't want to talk about that.

We have really seen this coming for some time. It shouldn't be a crisis, except, frankly, our friends on the other side seem intent on making it a crisis and seeing if they can include all of us suddenly in a spending discussion that we haven't been in up until now. How much debt can we have? How much can we afford? But what we have seen this year is, how much money can one side spend without involving the other side in any way?

We have never approached the debt limit in at least the last 25 years, that I am aware of, in a way that didn't involve talking about spending. In fact, I would argue that there is no real reason to have the debt limit if it doesn't force a discussion on spending. Other countries don't have it; we have it.

One reason I have always thought it actually served a purpose was it always generated a discussion on spending—not just a discussion on full faith and credit but how much money are we going to spend. In fact, when President

Obama was President and the debt ceiling had to be extended, we had a discussion about what our spending caps were going to be. We had a decade, because of that, of spending caps. We didn't always stick with them, but to not stick with them, you had to change the law, so that forced another discussion. We have all heard for a decade about the caps deal, the spending caps deal. Well, that was a discussion that was had so there would be a bipartisan agreement on the debt limit.

In June of 2019, we saw the debt limit coming again, and by that time, Speaker PELOSI, who was the Speaker of the House in charge of a majority in the House, said she wouldn't cooperate in doing anything on the debt limit unless the administration agreed to spend more money.

So there you have a spending discussion, but you also have one body of the Congress where the leader of the entire majority is saying: We are not going to be part of the debt limit unless we have an agreement on spending, and we want to spend more. From that moment on, Secretary Mnuchin, the Secretary of the Treasury, was up here over and over again, negotiating with the Speaker of the House on just how much more it was going to take for her to be part of the debt limit.

Now, here we are in almost October, 9 months through the year. Republicans really haven't been asked in any serious way up until now this year how to set parameters for government spending. We would like to spend less; the other side would like to spend more. But no Republicans—zero Republicans—have been involved in a plan to eliminate important parts of the 2017 tax bill that clearly were producing the kinds of economic results we had hoped for at the beginning of the pandemic.

No Republicans were part of the plan to spend right at \$2 trillion in the March COVID relief bill even though we really saw our economy already coming back.

By the way—no surprise—when you spend \$2 trillion, inflation is one of the things you are going to get when you put that much money into the economy on top of what we put in in 2020 in a bipartisan way to try to stabilize the economy.

Well, the economy was clearly stabilized by the first of last year, and no Republican, again, let me say, was part of how to spend that \$2 trillion.

No Republican has been part of the discussion of how to spend what our friends on the other side say would be a \$3.5 trillion, reckless tax-and-spending amount. Others estimate that 3.5 really would be 5 trillion. But, again, the point is not how big it would be; the point is, no Republican has been part of that.

If you look at what is actually in that legislation as it comes out of the House, some of the things are pretty amazing. There is \$3 billion on a project called Tree Equity. Now, I don't think that is to make all the

trees the same size. I assume that is a project to be sure that everybody has their fair percentage of the trees, whatever that would mean and how you describe that.

There is \$200 million for the Presidio, the park in Speaker PELOSI's district—\$200 million.

They are talking about \$8 billion in that bill for a new Civilian Climate Corps and \$7 billion to buy electric vehicles for the Postal Service.

Their plan comes to us with \$105 million for "entrepreneurial training" for people who are currently or have just been incarcerated.

There is even \$5 million in that bill for electronic voting systems for union elections. I am not opposed to union elections and am not opposed to unions having them. It would seem to me that they have up until now figured out how to provide their own equipment for their own elections or rent it or lease it. It is certainly a new sort of government involvement in that activity.

Frankly, the list goes on and on. At \$3 trillion, you are likely to have a lot of ideas. Seems to me that a lot of the ideas are, you come up with a number, which is what it takes to eliminate the 2017 tax cuts, and then start talking about, how many new things do we need to do to support that number?

Well, this shouldn't be an emergency. September is pretty late to reach out to the other side and not even now say "Well, let's talk about our spending priorities," but say, "Well, you need to help us with this because at some point, there is some money that had to be spent that was your responsibility too."

I guess we could have said that to Speaker PELOSI in 2019 when she said: Not going to do it unless we get more spending. And we wouldn't have had an agreement in the Obama years if we hadn't set a cap on spending.

The truth is, this isn't Speaker PELOSI's money, and it is not Senator SCHUMER's money, and it is not my money. We are talking about the money that belongs to the American people. They need to have a say in this.

In a 50-50 Senate, one side deciding "We are going to make all the decisions about spending money" means that one side is likely to wind up making all the decisions about how to reach the debt limit.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kansas.

Mr. MARSHALL. Madam President, with a Democratic President in the White House, Democrats controlling the House of Representatives, and Democrats controlling the Senate, those on the left have every arrow in the quiver they need to raise the debt limit. It is their sole responsibility. They own this. It is also their responsibility, having control of all the levers of government, to ensure that government does not shut down next Thursday at midnight.

As you have already heard from my colleagues here today, we Republicans

are united in the fact that we will not assist in passing another reckless, Big Government, socialism package designed to reshape the Nation and make Americans more dependent on the government from the moment they are born to the moment they die.

FDR once warned of a government dependency when he said that "continued dependence upon relief induces a spiritual and moral disintegration fundamentally destructive to the national fiber. To dole out relief in this way is to administer a narcotic, a subtle destroyer of the human spirit."

As elected officials, we are supposed to be good stewards of taxpayer dollars. We are supposed to leave this country in better shape for our children and grandchildren. But the Democrats' tax-and-spending spree accomplishes neither of these things and, in fact, further promulgates the government dependency FDR cautioned future generations about.

What is shocking is that in just one generation the national debt has soared from \$5 trillion to more than \$28 trillion. Think about that for a second. In the first 225 years of our Nation's history, the national debt was approximately \$5 trillion. In the last 20 years, we have increased it by nearly another \$25 trillion, including accumulating more than \$7 trillion in just the past 2 years.

Now, I said this before, but, folks, grab your wallets. Grab your wallets because the bill they want to pass for reconciliation is going to include massive spending that will put heavy debt on our country. It is going to raise your taxes. It is going to cause Medicare to run out in 2 years. And it is going to continue to drive up the cost of living.

The inflation we are seeing now is a double whammy. You have less money to spend, and the things you are able to buy cost more. It is hurting every hard-working American, but none more than our seniors and young families living paycheck to paycheck.

This looming government shutdown is just another crisis created by this administration. They created a crisis at our southern border, in Afghanistan, with a labor shortage, and now on the pocketbooks of Americans with a multitrillion-dollar socialist spending package.

While it is true America has seen a number of horrendous financial crises before, none have so quickly developed as the pending fiscal crisis President Biden created with the trillions of dollars' worth of reckless spending and reckless taxing in just the first 9 months of control.

And Democrats are now pointing fingers at Republicans, claiming that by refusing to go along with their out-of-control spending and joining them to increase the debt limit, that we are the ones who are being financially irresponsible.

Give me a break. If they were serious about getting our fiscal house in order,

they wouldn't be trying to force through another partisan spending bill that is going to bankrupt our country and instead would be pursuing budget reforms and debt reduction proposals in exchange for increasing the debt.

This is not a serious political party, and America needs to recognize that we have a choice between free enterprise capitalism and a socialist economy. Trust me, I heard loud and clear this past weekend during my townhall meetings in the Kansas City area about what Kansans want, and it is not the socialism that has borne out trillions of dollars' worth of spending and taxing that has led to reckless inflation, hampered our economy, and killed our jobs.

Ultimately, if you want strong roads, bridges, high-speed internet, good schools, and a strong military, we need a stronger economy. That should be our focus right now, not continuing down this administration's socialist economic policies.

Pre-COVID, we had the greatest economy in my lifetime. That came about because we lowered people's taxes, we lowered regulations, and we lowered energy prices. We need smart, targeted investments, not radical spending that leaves the country at a disadvantage.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Madam President, since day one of this administration, President Biden has made it abundantly clear that he is not interested in the opinion of anyone who poses a threat to his so-called transformative political agenda.

During his first 3 days in office, he signed 30 Executive orders and actions that embraced radical environmental policies, destroyed thousands of jobs associated with the Keystone Pipeline, and transformed our southern border into a war zone.

My colleagues on the other side of the aisle jumped on board with a reckless plan to borrow and spend their way into economic oblivion. They made it clear that despite having no mandate from the American people and no meaningful buy-in from Republicans, they are willing to do whatever it takes to transform this country into a wasteland defined by debt, dependency, and total government control.

They are alone in this; and for the past 9 months, that is the way the Democrats have really wanted it to be, at least until recently, when it became, oh, yes, politically inconvenient.

Lately, my Democratic colleagues have burned a lot of political capital, insisting that Republicans must come back to the table to help them raise the debt limit and avoid a doomsday scenario.

That is right. They are the party of party-line votes, and they can't find it within themselves to finance the cost of their very own reckless spending plan.

Why this sudden shift in sentiment?

The answer is simple. It is because they know that what they are doing is indefensible. They don't want to own this. They don't want to have to explain to their children and their grandchildren who are now stuck with the tab.

What are they going to say when their grandchild says: Why does the Federal Government take most of my money?

Well, it is because of their spending.

I don't blame them. If the Democrats have it their way, the national debt will hit more than \$40 trillion by the end of the decade. That is correct, \$40 trillion.

The American people can already feel the effects of this inflationary spending every time they go to the grocery store and every time they go to the gas pump. It looks like that inflation is going to be with us until the end of the Biden Presidency.

They have also noticed that our supply chains are running thin. As we speak, Democrats are negotiating the largest package of tax increases in decades. And contrary to the spin from the White House, those tax increases will hit small businesses and hard-working taxpayers.

Now, let's be clear. This all happened according to plan. It is intentional. But here is the problem: My colleagues on the other side of the aisle are realizing that all those persuadable voters they won in 2020 are having buyer's remorse.

They realize this is intentional by the Democrats. They may have voted for President Biden, but, as they tell me, they did not vote for this.

The Democrats have made a mess and, I'll tell you what, they did it in record time. The only option that they have left is to find a friend to try to share the blame.

I will play no part in facilitating this radical socialist agenda.

I would say to my Democratic colleagues: You have known for a long time that this day was coming, and yet you were content to squander your power on a unilateral, multitrillion-dollar agenda for which you have no mandate and you can't pay for. Leader McConnell did not do this to you. Donald Trump did not do this to you. This is, indeed, an emergency of your own creation. Elections have consequences. As such, you control the entire government, and there is no one standing in your way. You chose to govern alone, and, fortunately, you have all the tools you need to do your duty and address the debt limit right by yourselves. The time for manipulation and spin is over.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Indiana.

Mr. YOUNG. Madam President, when I served in the House of Representatives, I walked into a lot of meetings back in Indiana full of angry conservatives.

Do you know what they were angry about?

They were angry about the debt limit in 2011, 2013, 2014, and more.

And in each of those meetings, I made the argument that raising the debt limit was a necessary thing to do, a responsible thing to do, a conservative thing to do. I still believe that.

Defaulting on our Nation's debt will start a dangerous spiral of economic turmoil that will rebound to the disadvantage of the least among us. Interest rates would rise, the value of the dollar would fall, essential government workers might not get paid, and so on and so forth.

Now, back in those days, as a Republican in the House majority, we never failed to raise the debt limit—not once. And we also never failed to have a say in the spending that necessitated raising the debt limit. In 2019, we again raised the debt limit, this time through July 13 of this year.

Now it is Democrats. It is my Democrat friends who control the majority in both Chambers of Congress. And with that control, the hard-left has embarked on an unprecedented, reckless spending spree designed to remake America in their image in fairly short order—before year's end—\$1.9 trillion in March; a \$4.2 trillion budget authored by Senator BERNIE SANDERS; and now \$3.5 trillion on a partisan, human infrastructure grab bag, the largest spending bill in American history.

And so I say to my Democratic friends: You have decided to do all of that on your own, and now you want our help. It is unclear to me why you need it. You have done so much on your own. You have a number of options at your disposal to raise the debt limit all by yourself, just as you have gone it alone on this spending spree.

A farmer back home, over the August recess, came up to me as I was traveling the highways and byways of the Hoosier State. And I would like to think that the people I represent are blessed with a whole lot of common sense, which, for whatever reason, oftentimes doesn't permeate this town. And the farmer told me that it seems like in this instance the butcher wants to build a new slaughterhouse, and he is asking the cows to co-sign on the construction loan.

It is a pretty good metaphor for what the Democrats are asking of the Republican Members.

If Democrats had treated Republicans as a governing partner in an equally divided U.S. Senate these past 9 months, I might feel differently about this debt limit vote. Instead, they have treated us as an annoyance, an obstacle—adverse to every common interest we might have.

Now, I know we can count on my Democratic friends to ensure that America never defaults on its debt. I know we can count on every single Democratic U.S. Senator to vote to raise that debt ceiling, to own all of this spending they—and they alone—are responsible for.

I sure hope we can count on them to vote on a specific dollar figure in conjunction with the reconciliation bill. I know there has been apprehension made public by the budget chairman over in the House of Representatives. I suspect that is shared by many of my colleagues. But show some courage. Do what Republicans have done. Do what I have done. Walk the plank. Own this spending that you are responsible for.

I will let you know, a vote by Republicans to raise the debt limit at this point in time is a vote to co-sign the Democrats' partisan, irresponsible, and unprecedented spending spree, and we are going to have none of it.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. BARRASSO. Madam President, I come to the floor to join my colleague from Indiana and to congratulate him on those remarks, which would be most certainly well received in Wyoming, and reflect the feeling of the people in my State in terms of the reckless tax-and-spending process in which the Democrats are engaged.

And I come today to the floor to oppose what the Democrats are trying to do in terms of adding money to the debt, additional spending, a bill that has been described in so many ways. I read it and, to me, it is reckless. It is extreme. It is scary to talk about the sort of things that the Democrats are trying to impose on the American people.

When we take a look at what happens with this national debt, the folks on Medicare and on Social Security are concerned they are going to get undermined—those wonderful programs that work for so many people—because of the growing debt.

How are we going to address it?

Well, the suspension of the debt ceiling expired a month and a half ago. Less than 2 weeks later, Democrats passed a blueprint for the largest spending bill in the history of the United States, over \$3.5 trillion. People looked at it and saw how much it is, and they said: Democrats may say it is \$3.5 trillion; it is a lot more than that. More than America spent in World War II to win the war? This is in addition to the \$2 trillion already spent and added to the debt by this administration on a party-line vote earlier this year.

So America's debt is now over \$28 trillion. We are on our way to \$30 trillion. You divide that out by the number of men, women, and children in America, and it is approaching \$100,000 per individual. It is going to have to be paid back ultimately to Wall Street, to Japan, to China, and to those that hold our debt.

And the problem, when you look at a debt that large, and say, "How do you put that into perspective," is how much interest are we paying on the loan? People that borrow money for a car or a home know how much interest they are paying on the loan, and for the United States, it is approaching

\$400 billion in interest on the loan a year. And this is at record low interest rates.

Well, where is that money coming from? You know, you get nothing in return for it. But Democrats seem to think we need to just keep spending money and borrowing money to pay for the reckless spending. They don't want voters to know about it. They don't want voters to know how much money. They are asking for an unlimited ability to spend until after the 2022 election.

That is what is coming over from the House. They say: Don't ask us. We are not going to tell you. We are just going to keep on spending like there is no tomorrow, all the way through a date after the 2022 election.

They want to cover all of this spending by suspending what is called the debt ceiling so they can borrow as much as they want.

Well, it is not going to happen. You can't have it both ways. If they try to spend trillions of dollars, they are going to be responsible for the consequences of that spending. Republicans are not going to give CHUCK SCHUMER and NANCY PELOSI a blank check, period. We are not going to give them a rubberstamp to their reckless spending. If Democrats want to raise the debt ceiling, they have the capacity to do it on their own, and they will need to do it on their own. Republicans are not going to participate.

The Democrats have been in charge of Washington now for 8 full months. They have complete control—the House, the Senate, the White House. During all that time, they haven't raised a finger to lift the debt ceiling. Instead, they had the Secretary of the Treasury send a letter. She said the Treasury will run out of money in October. It is now September 22. The clock is ticking.

Democrats chose not to raise the debt ceiling when they passed their \$2 trillion addition to the debt earlier this year. They called it COVID relief, but actually 90 percent of the money actually went for medical care. They chose not to raise it as part of this over \$3.5 trillion or \$4 trillion spending bill that is being proposed as a result of BERNIE SANDERS' socialist budget.

And Democrats think that the American people can keep spending money in such a reckless way. They are playing chicken with our economy. They think they can fool the American people. It is not going to work. Republicans are not going to be held hostage by the Democrats, and the American people should not be either or be put on the hook.

If Democrats have enough votes to spend trillions of taxpayer dollars, then they have enough votes to raise the debt limit. This is Democrat debt. It is Biden-Schumer-Pelosi debt. Senate Republicans will not vote to burden future generations or to undermine Social Security and Medicare today with this kind of reckless spending.

We are not going to vote for the spending bill—not one of us—and not going to vote to raise the debt limit on Democrat terms. If they want to go it alone on spending, the Democrats can go it alone on raising the debt ceiling.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

NOMINATION OF LILY LAWRENCE BATCHELDER

Mr. WYDEN. Madam President, today, the Senate is debating Professor Lily Batchelder's nomination by President Biden to serve as Assistant Treasury Secretary for Tax Policy.

I am going to be brief, but I just want the Senate to know that Ms. Batchelder is an extraordinary individual, and I think she will serve in an extraordinary way when she is confirmed.

She is not a stranger to the Senate, particularly for those of us who serve on the Finance Committee. From 2010 until 2014, she was chief tax counsel to then Chairman Max Baucus. Members were working hard, looking at ways to drive a broader economic recovery following a recession. It was also a time when Members were interested in trying to drive a little bit of common sense—and I will talk about this more in a minute—into America's broken Tax Code.

Lily excelled in working with Democrats and Republicans to try to find common ground. She understood, from the time she arrived at the Finance Committee, that if you really want to tackle big challenges, if you want to come up with big solutions and make them sustainable, you have to find common ground.

After her service on the Finance Committee, Lily became the Deputy Director of the National Economic Council under President Obama. She now serves as the Robert C. Kopple Family Professor of Taxation at the NYU School of Law. And one of the aspects of her scholarship that I particularly admire is her efforts to craft tax policies that bring more American workers into the economic winners circle.

She understands the Tax Code inside and out. She knows the Congress. She knows how the Congress and the administration work. And that is the reason why the Finance Committee approved her nomination with such a strong bipartisan margin, a 22-to-6 margin. Members of both sides thought that she would be a great addition to Treasury. The Senate ought to vote the same way.

Second, Lily's nomination has waited long enough for consideration on the Senate floor. Secretary Yellen needs a full team in place at Treasury. The country is going to be dealing with the aftereffects of the pandemic economic crash for years to come. There is a long way to go—a long way to go—before full recovery.

And when we confirm her, she is going to have a chance to really bring real insight into some big areas, like

dealing with the climate crisis, the nationwide lack of affordable housing, and an increasingly unfair Tax Code.

And I just want to give you an example of the kind of issues she is going to have to take on. My colleagues here in the Senate have heard me talk about how it is that they are reading news stories about how billionaires all across America end up paying little or no income tax for years on end. Well, there is a little secret to how this happens, and it is because these billionaires are advised, in many instances: Don't take a wage; don't have taxable income; put your money into stocks.

That was what we did see during the pandemic, and they ended up with even more financial resources than anyone imagined, while we read the news articles describing how they paid little or no income tax for years on end.

As the chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, a top priority of mine—and I don't see how anybody can oppose this idea—is to say that when nurses and firefighters pay taxes with every paycheck every year, that we should say that the billionaires—we are glad they are so successful—should pay their fair share every year.

So I have proposed a billionaire's tax to close this loophole of unfairness. It just seems to me to be a basic question of fairness, for people in Nevada or Oregon or anywhere else, that we all pay our fair share—we all pay our fair share. And that is just one example of what Ms. Batchelder is going to be dealing with.

For example, on clean energy, again, the Finance Committee wants to break some new ground. We said: Take the 44 energy tax breaks that are on the books—most of them are relics from yesteryear—and put them in the dustbin of history, and in the future have one for clean energy, one for clean transportation fuel, and one for energy efficiency.

And then, going forward, we will have tech neutrality. And we will say to every company: Everybody involved in the energy area, the more you reduce carbon emissions, the bigger your savings. The Senate Finance Committee never did anything like this in 100 years. But to really carry this out, you are going to have to have really talented people like Lily Batchelder there.

So she is going to understand what it means to make sure everybody pays their fair share, and that means billionaires are no longer exempt from paying their fair share.

She is going to be a huge asset as we deal with climate change. And, my God, if people think about the last 6 weeks—the Bootleg Fire in Oregon, and I know my colleague in Nevada has been clobbered by these fires; the storms in the South; and what we saw in the east coast of the United States—climate change has hit this country like a wrecking ball.

We are going to have Lily Batchelder confirmed, I hope, here very shortly.

Those are the kinds of policy ideas she is going to be able to pursue.

The Treasury Department needs a tax policy point guard, somebody who, in effect—and everybody knows I went to school on a basketball scholarship dreaming of playing in the NBA. You always admired the person who ran the floor, who was the point guard, who really made sure the work got done and didn't really care who got the credit. That is Lily Batchelder. And if ever there was a person who could really help chip away at the polarization between Democrats and Republicans, it is Lily Batchelder.

I support her nomination fully. I urge my colleagues to do the same, and I yield the floor.

Madam President, I have one more nomination to discuss, and I would ask unanimous consent that I could complement my remarks—and I will be brief on this nomination—before we vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### NOMINATION OF JAYME RAY WHITE

Mr. WYDEN. Madam President, next, the Senate is considering the nomination of Jayme White for the position of Deputy U.S. Trade Representative.

Now, Senators know that Jayme has been a longtime member of my Finance Committee staff. So I won't bury that lede today. We feel, all of us who have had a chance to work with him in the Finance Committee—and he has been supported by business and labor and Senators who worked together with him repeatedly over the years on complicated trade issues. We all come together to make the case that Jayme will be an exemplary Deputy USTR representative.

He is a topnotch advocate for our workers, our businesses, our farmers, and our ranchers. His confirmation will be a loss for the Senate Finance Committee—I can tell you that—but it is going to be the American people's gain.

For a little bit on Jayme's background, he is from our part of the world, the Pacific Northwest. He is a son of union workers near Seattle. He has worked on trade policy for more than 20 years on Capitol Hill. We kind of lured him away from his old job, working for his hometown representative, Congressman Jim McDermott. And since 2014, he has been the top trade and competitiveness adviser for the Finance Committee Democrats.

I have had a front-row seat watching Jayme for over a decade, and what he has always tried to do is reach across the aisle and say: Look, we know that to create more high-skilled, high-wage jobs in the private sector—and in our part of the world that is crucial. One out of four jobs depends on trade, and trade jobs pay better, often, than the nontrade jobs. You have to think about workers and the environment and good governance. And Jayme brings Members together from both sides of the aisle to make sure our trade policies in those areas are durable for the long term.

He has been way ahead of the pack on the need for more aggressive trade enforcement. Years ago, when I was chairman of the Finance Trade Subcommittee—our colleague Max Baucus was chairman of the full committee—Jayme set up a sting operation, an actual sting operation, with a dummy website to show how the trade cheats, the rip-off artists, were able to launder merchandise and avoid paying customs duties. They would ship goods through other countries, slap a new label on something with different information on their products, and managed to slip them into the American market. That experience helped us write and build momentum for trade enforcement, came to be known as the ENFORCE Act, passed a few years later.

When the Trump administration's new NAFTA was weak on enforcement, Jayme and Ambassador Tai worked to make huge improvements. And we all worked together in our committee. There were many of us. And, certainly, our colleague Senator BROWN of Ohio, who has championed this for so many years, this effort, this bipartisan effort to strengthen enforcement, made sure that USMCA raised the bar over any other trade agreement in history in terms of enforceable commitments on labor rights and the environment. He has been a champion of transparency and accountability.

And I can tell you, when I came into public life, people hardly knew anything about trade agreements that were getting ready to be voted on. I mean, you would go home for a meeting and people would ask you about some trade proposal, and you would be kind of in the dark. Jayme wanted to make sure that the days when well-connected reporters and insiders in the industry knew more than Members of Congress and the public about what was being negotiated—Jayme said: We are going to change that. And we did. There are now concrete rules giving Members access to negotiating text while the negotiations happen. Final text-to-trade agreements have to be public for anybody to see for a minimum of 60 days before the Congress can consider approving it. Those commitments to transparency, new accountability, which we had nothing like when I came into public life, come about because of Jayme's hard work.

So I will sum it all up. I know we are waiting for our vote. What I have come to say—and we have all listened to the debates about free trade and fair trade and the like—Jayme understands that our challenge, for all of us, for our workers and our small businesses and to protect the rights of all concerned, we have got to have trade done right—trade done right: rigorously enforce the trade laws on the books, make sure that there is more transparency and accountability, and, particularly, make sure that foreign markets—foreign markets—are open to American products and American workers.

I will just tell you, I am sorry to lose him after 12 years on my staff. I always

knew that he would be going off to big things. I wasn't sure it was going to be this soon.

Twenty-five members of the Finance Committee agreed with me when they voted to send his nomination to the floor. He has got 110 percent of my support. I urge my colleagues to vote yes on the White nomination.

My understanding is we will vote first on the Batchelder nomination that I spoke about earlier and that a bit later in the evening, we will vote on Mr. White. I strongly urge colleagues to vote for both.

#### VOTE ON BATCHELDER NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Batchelder nomination?

Mr. WYDEN. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) is necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS).

The PRESIDING OFFICER. (Ms. BALDWIN). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 64, nays 34, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 372 Ex.]

#### YEAS—64

Baldwin	Hassan	Reed
Bennet	Heinrich	Romney
Blumenthal	Hickenlooper	Rosen
Blunt	Hirono	Sanders
Booker	Kaine	Schatz
Brown	Kelly	Schumer
Cantwell	King	Shaheen
Cardin	Klobuchar	Sinema
Carper	Leahy	Smith
Casey	Lujan	Stabenow
Cassidy	Manchin	Tester
Collins	Markey	Tillis
Coons	McConnell	Toomey
Cornyn	Menendez	Van Hollen
Cortez Masto	Merkley	Warner
Crapo	Murkowski	Warnock
Daines	Murphy	Warren
Duckworth	Murray	Whitehouse
Durbin	Ossoff	Wyden
Gillibrand	Padilla	Young
Graham	Peters	
Grassley	Portman	

#### NAYS—34

Barrasso	Hawley	Risch
Blackburn	Hoeben	Rubio
Boozman	Hyde-Smith	Sasse
Braun	Inhofe	Scott (FL)
Burr	Johnson	Scott (SC)
Capito	Kennedy	Shelby
Cotton	Lankford	Sullivan
Cramer	Lee	Thune
Cruz	Lummis	Tuberville
Ernst	Marshall	Wicker
Fischer	Moran	
Hagerty	Paul	

#### NOT VOTING—2

Feinstein	Rounds
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The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid

upon the table, and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The senior Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. INHOFE. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that I be recognized as if in morning business for such time as I shall consume.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### BIDEN ADMINISTRATION

Mr. INHOFE. Madam President, first of all, I am going to do something that is a little bit unusual. I will start off by saying thank you. We have got a lot of people to thank. Yet we never seem to do that.

When we look at what happened in Afghanistan over the past 20 years—I can't approximate how many times I was over there—that was tough duty for those guys and the gals there; it was not easy. This is not the place you want to go take a vacation—and to their families. Then, of course, on August 26, we were reminded so painfully of what we ask our troops and their families to do. They lay it all on the line for this country. Our servicemembers represent the very best of us. Over the past 20 years, they did everything that they could in Afghanistan to root out evil and to champion American values. I couldn't be more grateful to or have more respect for them than I have today.

I say this not only because we should say it more often but because it is important to remember that what we saw in Afghanistan over the past few months was not a failure of our military; it was a failure of the Commander in Chief—the President of the United States—and the people who advised him on his policy in Afghanistan.

I still don't know who those people are, and, you know, I have chaired the Senate Armed Services Committee and other committees. People ask me, when I go back to my State of Oklahoma—they will say: Hey, who is advising the President to do all these things? I have to tell them I don't know, and I have been around for a long time. I don't remember any administration where I just honestly didn't know who was making the decisions and who was advising—in this case, advising the President.

But what we did witness, though, was a failure of the Commander in Chief and whoever was advising him. No one can look at what happened over the past few months and claim that it was a success like President Biden did. It was a disaster. Leaving Americans behind, and allies—don't forget our allies who are still left behind. It was un-American.

The administration keeps saying: "We didn't inherit a plan." That is false. They inherited a condition-based agreement and made their own policy decisions. It was condition-based; it wasn't open-ended. It was something that was out there, and they had the reins.

Let's keep in mind, this administration has a majority in the House and the Senate and the White House, and they make their own decisions. And they say: We didn't have a plan. They had a plan, and we had a plan, but everything we did and the previous administration did was condition-based.

So according to the condition-based approach, President Trump agreed to withdraw our troops from Afghanistan if and only if the Taliban acted against al-Qaida. Now, that is one of the things. There were many other conditions, and one condition was to leave some of our troops there, not just to walk away, to vacate. And those conditions were in line when this administration came in, and that didn't happen. President Biden knows it. Secretary Blinken admitted it.

When President Biden announced his decision to withdraw back in April, a senior administration official told the Washington Post: "The President has judged that a condition-based approach is a recipe for staying in Afghanistan forever." That is a quote.

Just last week, in front of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, when asked if the Taliban had severed its relationship with al-Qaida, Secretary Blinken said the relationship has not been severed.

Let's keep that in mind. We keep hearing that, yes, they are taking action against that administration, but the relationship has not been severed.

Now President Biden says that he will hold the Taliban accountable, but he didn't hold the Taliban accountable while our troops were still in Afghanistan. I mean, that is when we had the leverage to do it, but we didn't do it, and he has presented no plan for holding the terrorists accountable now.

This decision—this rushed withdrawal that has left the Taliban stronger than it was in 9/11 was President Biden's alone. He is responsible for the chaos that followed. He is going to be held accountable and should—everyone who advised him to make such a horrible decision.

Now, what is more outrageous to me is that President Biden left Americans behind. That is not something we do. He said that we were going to get everyone out, and that didn't happen.

You know, when historians look back at this—this may be decades from now, centuries from now—this is what they will remember: The Biden administration knowingly left Americans behind.

The administration has tried to downplay this. Early in the evacuation, Secretary of State Blinken said that there were perhaps 10,000 or 15,000 American citizens in Afghanistan. Our men and women in uniform, working tirelessly and effectively with our diplomats under incredibly difficult circumstances, managed to evacuate about 6,000 of our citizens. Now, according to my math, that means that between 4,000 and 9,000 Americans were left behind. Secretary Blinken says that there were only 100 and that the

rest of them preferred to stay in Afghanistan.

By the way, some legitimately did prefer to stay in Afghanistan because they were married people, they had families, and they made it very clear that—when something like this normally happens, families are moved as a family unit. Not there. That is not what happened.

So that is more than bad math; it is a lie. We know and every congressional office that tried to get people out of Afghanistan knows—and I know this because our Senate office was very busy at that time helping people to get out—that there were many U.S. citizens who wanted to leave Afghanistan, but they couldn't leave because the Taliban would not let their families go with them. Well, that is exactly what I would expect from the terrorists who were there at that time.

So Secretary Blinken wants you to think that these people made a choice. He wants to hide the fact that the administration in which he serves created its own hostage crisis and gave the Taliban the upper hand.

Keep in mind when we talk about this, it is the Taliban. They were the terrorists.

He also wants you to think it was the fault of those families they didn't get out before August, repeating that they had been telling Americans to leave for months. There is a kernel of truth to that, but it is clouded by the fact that they repeatedly stated that it would be a year, probably more, before Kabul was at risk of falling to the Taliban. Instead of 36 months, the fall of Kabul only took 36 hours.

In addition to American citizens, President Biden left behind our Afghan partners who risked everything to support our shared security goals. I was out there many times in the past, talking about that very thing, about the problems they had and the dangers they were in.

Now, these are not our American citizens; they were some of our allies who were left over there. In addition to American citizens, President Biden left behind our Afghan partners who risked everything to support our shared security goals. As a result of the President's decision, Afghan women and children have been thrown back to the stone age. We all know that. We know what they are doing right now. We don't have to guess.

Our allies and partners around the world are questioning our credibility, our leadership, and our commitment. These are our allies. They are not used to having the rug pulled out from under them. This is the first time.

Our enemies are bolstered by President Biden's policy, which puts Taliban terrorists in charge of Afghanistan—a policy that spread the perception that we not only abandoned our allies and partners, but we also abandoned our own citizens.

Seeing all these failures, Americans are demanding accountability, and they deserve it.

But let's make this crystal clear: None of this is the fault of our military. Our military leaders, the ones with real experience on the ground, advised the same thing that I did, and that is, leave a small force in Afghanistan. Now, this would have supported the Afghan military, prevented the Taliban's takeover, kept the pressure on the terrorists, reassured our regional partners, and kept our homeland safe.

President Biden pretends that none of this was possible. He claims that he had two options: a massive deployment or zero troops, which is not true. In fact, I publicly supported a third option: maintain a small force to preserve our air power. We can't do the air power without some troops on the ground. We needed to have some troops on the ground—we did—counterterrorism operations and military operations.

Many of us here supported a small, tailored deployment to protect our core interests, and so did his own military advisers. Yet, when he was asked, "Did your top military advisers warn against withdrawing on this timeline? Did they ask you to keep 2,500 troops?" President Biden said, "No, they didn't. That wasn't true."

But it was true. We talked to the—in fact, you are going to find something out this coming Tuesday when we have a hearing. We are going to have many of the principals whom we really haven't heard from, principals who were involved in advising the administration as to what the military wanted and didn't want.

Except it was. We know that now. The former commander of U.S. Forces-Afghanistan, General Miller, told the Senate Armed Services Committee just this last week—this is our committee, the committee I chaired for some period of time—he said no. Now, he didn't tell President Biden directly because President Biden didn't even bother calling his top commander on the ground before making his decision, but General Miller did report it to the chain of command.

Now, we are talking about General Miller. At that time, he was the top commander on the ground. So the President didn't even consult him as to whether or not we should—he made it very clear he advised him not to go, not to close everything up.

He also tried to say that al-Qaida is "gone" from Afghanistan and that "terrorism is not emanating from that part of the world." Well, we know that is not true. General McKenzie said al-Qaida remains the main focus in the region.

Last week, the Director of the Defense Intelligence Agency—that is LTC Scott Barrier—said that the projected timeline for al-Qaida to have the capability to threaten our homeland is 1 to 2 years at most, if not sooner, and that is it.

So President Biden was not telling the truth in that area about having only two choices. He didn't tell the

truth about getting American families out of Afghanistan. He failed to tell the truth about the advice that he got from his military commanders, saying that his military commanders did not advise him. We know better than that, and if you don't know it, stick around for next Tuesday, and you will find out. He didn't tell the truth about al-Qaida not being a threat.

So I have to wonder, if he is not telling the truth about this, what else is he not telling the truth about? If we can't trust the President on this, if we can't trust him to tell the truth and we can't trust him to put together a good strategy in Afghanistan, how can we trust him to protect the Nation from our strategic competitors?

After watching President Biden stumble badly in Afghanistan, I am worried that he won't pursue a strong strategy to push back on China, and China is our top threat right now. We all know that. We don't like to talk about it, but it is true.

As former Secretary Gates famously wrote in his memoir, President Biden has "been wrong on nearly every major foreign policy and national security issue over the past four decades." That was Secretary Gates, former Secretary of Defense.

I am also worried about the administration desperately trying again to return to the Obama administration's failed Iran deal and offering Iran massive sanctions relief, sanctions that were put on in the previous administration to get their—of course, we know Iran would just use the sanctions relief to ramp up terrorism.

You know, I don't know how the American people—maybe it is the people in Oklahoma. They are the ones I have talked to more than any other groups. You know, what else would they do? What would Iran, with their background, do with sanction relief or with funds? They would use it on terrorism. That brings us back to Afghanistan, which is only one of many, many examples in the Middle East and North Africa where the administration has no plan for countering terrorists and keeping us safe.

President Biden and his administration have broadly talked about a new over-the-horizon strategy to counterterrorism. "Over the horizon" means that we don't have boots on the ground. We send airplanes in from afar—something our military leaders have told us is way more difficult than most people believe, far more expensive, and almost impossible without partners on the ground.

We can't do it. You can't just lead with military airpower. Even if it is possible, experts are telling us it won't be effective. We haven't even seen a plan for how this will be enough to keep American families safe.

This is a failure of leadership. Along the way, President Biden has tried to blame everyone else—the Afghan Security Forces, the Afghan Government, and the previous administration. But

the blame lands squarely on him, and he owns this.

We should expect his failures in Afghanistan to bleed into other issues. China and Russia see a weak America now. Terrorists see safe havens and use Afghanistan as a rallying cry.

I still have a lot more questions and expect President Biden and his administration to have more answers. Thirteen brave Americans died in the chaos created by President Biden's policies. We need explanations and we need accountability.

We are going to hear from Secretary Austin, General Milley, and General McKenzie next week. This is going to be on Tuesday. I have reminded people of that for a long time because we need to have a clear understanding, and we will get that understanding. We are going to start to understand this—just what went wrong, who is to blame, and what we need to do to protect ourselves. This is going to be an open meeting. This is not a classified meeting. This is an open meeting that is going to take place this coming Tuesday. We are going to be doing this as transparently and openly as possible because the American people deserve the truth. Our servicemembers and their families who sacrificed so much over the last 20 years deserve that, too, and we are going to give them the truth. That is going to happen next week.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MURPHY). The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### THE CHILD TAX CREDIT

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, it is always a thrill to come to the floor to talk about the child tax credit, especially with three colleagues who really are the authors and the most important pushers, if you will, of this bill in the Senate.

I am going to turn it to Senator BENNET—he and I worked on this for damn close to a decade now—and Senator BOOKER. And then we will be joined last by Senator WARNOCK, who has only been in the Senate for a year—not even—and has done so much already for the State of Georgia, and he is one of the best supporters of this in the U.S. Senate.

So I will reserve my comments for a little later. Senator BENNET will go first.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Colorado.

Mr. BENNET. Mr. President, I want to thank my colleague from Ohio, Senator BROWN, for his remarkable leadership in getting us to this point with the child tax credit and with the earned income tax credit for childless families which, thanks to his leadership, we have been able to triple.

But I think we are here today on a really, really momentous matter. When I think back to the days when I was the superintendent of schools in Denver, most of the kids in my city were kids of color and most were living in poverty, and many of their families were working two or three jobs. And no matter what they did, they couldn't get their kids out of poverty.

Today, now, I travel the State of Colorado, a State that has got very rural areas and very urban areas. If I had to summarize the last 10 years of my townhalls—10 or 11 years—it is very easy to do it. No matter what country I am in, people say: We are killing ourselves, and no matter what we do, we can't afford some combination of housing, healthcare, higher education, early childhood education—if there is any childhood education. We can't save. We feel like our kids are going to live a more diminished life than the life we lived.

That is the anecdotal reflection of an economy that, for 50 years in this country, has worked really well for the top 10 percent of Americans and not for anybody else. The result of that is, today, the United States is 38th out of 41 industrialized countries, in terms of childhood poverty.

The poorest people in our society are our children. The poorest generation in the United States of America are our children, which is scandalous.

Senators BROWN, BOOKER, WARNOCK, and then-Senator HARRIS, before that, and I came together to try to address it and to say that we don't have to accept this much childhood poverty as a permanent feature of our economy or a permanent feature of our society. We can actually fix this by making three changes to the child tax credit: to increase the amount and make it fully refundable, so that for the first time in our country's history the poorest kids have the benefit of it; and to have it paid out on a monthly basis, so that when parents and grandparents are at the end of the month trying to make the rent or buy a few more groceries or pay for a little bit more childcare, they are able to do it in real time.

I am sure my colleagues on the floor today spent time meeting with people in their States over the recess. I did. I met mostly moms, but parent after parent after parent, who said to me: For the first time in my life, I was able to buy back-to-school clothes, and I didn't bankrupt my family. Buying back-to-school clothes was not a catastrophe for my family. My kid was able to go to school in a new shirt.

One mom in Colorado Springs said to me that she bought a bicycle for her son so he could take himself to school and participate in afterschool programs that he wouldn't have otherwise been able to participate in, because he could take himself there and bring himself back.

She said that he had burst a tire in this new bicycle and that she was able, because of the child tax credit, not to

buy the cheap tire that she would ordinarily buy that would break next week—as she said—but to buy a tire that the kid could rely on. She said, “That is what being poor in America is like; you have to pay a tax on everything,” because you can't buy a decent pair of shoes and you can't buy a decent tire for a bike.

This is a reason why 450 economists have written to the administration saying we should be making this permanent. And I believe we should be making it permanent. They have also pointed out that it is very important for people to hear that this is pro-work. The countries that have child allowances like this actually have a higher percentage of people in the workforce than we do, because people can use that allowance to pay for a little extra childcare so they can stay at work. They can use that allowance to help pay to fix a car so they can stay at work. This is a pro-work policy.

Just as importantly, childhood poverty costs our country \$1 trillion a year. We have been told by Columbia University that we are going to see an 8x annual return as a result of cutting childhood poverty in half this year, which this policy does, as opposed to spending money just to mitigate the effects of childhood poverty.

So there is every reason in the world that we should make this permanent, that we should extend it. In my view, we can't afford not to, and that is why we are here today.

I want to thank my colleague from New Jersey, Senator BOOKER, somebody I have known since he was mayor of Newark and I was the superintendent of the Denver Public Schools, and we were working together to try to lift up kids in our respective communities. There have been many times when I have been on this floor and I have said that we are treating America's children like they are someone else's children, that only a country that didn't care about their kids would treat our kids the way we have.

But, finally, we are not. Finally, we said: We are not going to tolerate this. And a lot of that has to do with the Senator from New Jersey's leadership.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. BOOKER. Mr. President, I want to thank the two leaders that I joined, Senators BROWN and BENNET, for championing this issue, not just for this Congress but for years. Before I came to Washington, these two men were standing up and talking about the moral core of our country.

If you want to see how a nation is doing, don't look at the buildings we build or at how many billionaires we have. Just look at children. What is galling me right now is that we have come to the 1-yard line.

We are at an inflection point in our country where we have to ask a question: Who are we?

My friend Senator BENNET and I have been working with kids well before we

came here. He rattled off data that should be repeated. I say this is a moral issue, but he has shown us it is an economic issue. We are the wealthiest Nation on the planet Earth, and of the top 41 countries, we are at 38 in poor kids. What he pointed out is that poverty costs all of us. It is a deep, self-inflicted wound in this society, because poverty costs this Nation over \$1 trillion as measured by economists.

But I would state that economists don't measure all the things that are important. Our GDP does not reflect well-being. It doesn't reflect how many antidepressants people take or how many child deaths there are. But the truth of our economy is that every dollar that we invest in getting children out of poverty returns \$8 to this economy. So it is an economic issue, clearly.

It is a globally competitive issue because in a global, knowledge-based society, the Nation whose children learn the most will earn the most and will outcompete.

It is a national security issue as we go up against countries like China, whose top 10 percent of their graduating high school classes outnumber all the children we have, virtually.

But it is a moral issue most of all. If we are going to create a more beloved community, how do we treat our children?

Children who live in poverty literally have physical effects. Poverty is violence. Study after study shows that the brain development of children in poverty is inhibited, literally—the stress hormones, the cortisol. It is akin to an adult having a traffic accident every single day. It is an indicator of childhood trauma.

Poverty is a moral obscenity, and we, the richest Nation on the planet, where, year after year, our rich are getting richer, our children are getting poorer—who are we when we pledge allegiance to a flag and say “liberty and justice for all”? Who are we?

We don't even know the demographic changes in our country. We have cities across America where 1 out of every 10 children is being raised by a grandparent. So here we are discussing childhood poverty, and some people are talking about work requirements, when we know from the data, from conservative think tanks to what we see in other nations like Canada, that things like the child allowance—or in our country, the child tax credit—increase workforce participation. But if you get rid of the child tax credit, those grandparents raising grandchildren—half of them—plunge back into poverty.

The stories are profound.

We heard from my colleague from Colorado. We know families in New Jersey, like a woman I just saw named Margarita. She used her child tax credit payments for exactly what so many said they would be used for. She used them for food for her children, for school supplies, to keep the electricity running in her house. We have heard

stories that they are used for a car bill to get people to work. They are used to pay for childcare that they need for their families so that they can work. Families are not using this money so they could quit their jobs. Quite the contrary, they are using them so they can get to work.

We are a nation in crisis because of how we treat our children. The child tax credit is a lifeline for the millions of grandparents raising grandchildren. It is a lifeline for low-income children.

So you heard from Senator BENNET. We are at an inflection point. What will we do right now? Will we extend the child tax credit? Will we make the full refundability permanent? Will we keep people having these monthly checks? That is a policy question. But the question before us really is a moral one. For once and for all, this is not partisan. It is a defining moment for the character of our country, and I say words are not enough.

We should show the child tax credit—the truth in our policies and what we do with our budgets. We should show our love through what we do, not what we say. And the best leading indicator of that will always be how the most vulnerable in our society are doing, how we take care of our elderly, and, in this case, how we care for our children.

I am honored now to have come to the floor our Senator from Georgia. I would remark that as much as I love the Senator from Ohio and the Senator from Colorado, the Senator from Georgia has a much better haircut.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I thank Senator BOOKER, and I join my friend Senator WARNOCK here to talk about this. Thanks to Senator BENNET, Senator BOOKER, and Senator WARNOCK for their leadership on what I think is the most important thing I have done in my years in public office: the child tax credit that Senator BENNET and I began on years and years and years ago, joined by other colleagues. Senator WARNOCK has really taken it over in a big way this year in getting it across the finish line. Sorry for the sports metaphor, but that is how important this is.

Senator BENNET said something about—and I guess Senator BOOKER—that raising children is work. At least one of my colleagues—a number of my colleagues on that side of the aisle, and I believe a colleague or two on this side of the aisle, said something about a work requirement in a child tax credit. And I don't understand that because I spent a lot of time, including this weekend, with my grandchildren, and I see how hard my daughters work raising children and our son works raising children and the pressures. And this bill, cutting everything else away, relieves some of the anxiety that parents face, the anxiety of how do I get the money together to pay the rent this week, before the end of the month, so I

don't get evicted or I don't get behind in my rent—just the opportunities for these parents.

So I want to talk directly—directly—to Ohio parents. We talk about parents and about the child tax credit. I want to talk to Ohio parents for a moment.

Parents, check your bank accounts. A week ago today, we once again put money directly in the pockets of the families of most Ohio parents. The families of 92 percent of Ohio children are getting these dollars either direct deposit in their accounts or in their mailboxes in checks. It started July 15, then August 15, and then September 15. It will continue. Our goal on the floor today is to make this permanent; at least to make sure this goes beyond the end of the year. We are going to succeed in doing that. It is so important that we do.

Back to talking to parents. We know how hard you work at your jobs and raising your kids. Any parent knows how much work it is to take care of children, especially young children. It has only gotten harder over the last year and a half. The pressures are greater. The anxiety placed on families is more.

We have not recognized in this country often enough that raising children is work. If you have a job outside the home, you are probably not getting paid what you are worth. We have seen what has happened over the past few decades.

Productivity has gone up. Stock prices have soared. Executive compensation is stratospheric. The wages have been flat. Wages for most Americans have barely budged; meanwhile, you all as parents know how expensive it is to raise kids—childcare, healthcare, school lunches, diapers, clothes, school supplies, braces, sports fees. The list never seems to end. That is not to mention trying to put money away—just a few dollars a month—trying to put money away for college or sending your kid to camp or maybe—maybe, as I have heard from some parents—for the first time in 2 or 3 years, they are going to get to take a little vacation for a few days or maybe, once a month, going out to dinner at the local diner.

You feel like you can't keep up no matter how hard you work. It is why we passed the child tax credit. It is why we started, several years ago, working to get other Senators on board until we had virtually, literally, every Senator on this side of the aisle. Every single Democrat has voted for the child tax credit twice already.

Unfortunately, every single Republican voted against it. I don't even really understand why they are against it when, you know, you could look out down the aisle here, you can look down the hall, and Senator MCCONNELL's office is down the hall, and you see the lobbyists lining up there. They always get their tax cuts.

A train carrying tax cuts leaves the station whenever Republicans are in

power—a tax cut for wealthy people—but this is a tax cut for working families, and we know how important that is. It is finally—finally—to America's parents, making your hard work pay off so you can keep up with those extra expenses that keep coming and coming and coming when you are raising a family.

Stories have poured into our office from parents across Ohio about these tax cuts. Let me just give you snippets of several of them.

Katie in Akron: It helps pay for school supplies.

Caitlin: It pays for preschool for my son.

Lindsay: It is back-to-school clothes.

Fern: It will pay for preschool for both of my children, and the rest is going into a savings account for them.

From Melissa: I used part of it to buy school uniform pieces for my 4-year-old.

Jennifer: Put it away for college tuition.

Maia: Food and school supplies.

And one of the most common stories we hear over and over is that parents are using this to afford childcare so they can go back to work or keep working or work a few more hours.

One mother from Minford in Southern Ohio near Portsmouth, wrote to me, and she said:

My husband and I are middle class, raising two children [both] under 6. . . . We have been worried about the financial burden of paying for 2 children in full-time child care.

The \$300, per child, will be placed directly towards child care so . . . we [don't] have to worry about how my participation in the workforce affects us, and allow us to participate more in the economy.

She continued:

I believe these payments will allow more parents, especially mothers, to participate more fully in the workforce, [allowing] them more time to pursue training, and help American families [get] food on the table. From the bottom of my heart, thank you.

She really tells the story. You know in Connecticut and in Georgia that not everybody has gone back to work that could find work; in part, because employers are finally starting to pay more, but so much of the time because they can't find childcare or they can't afford childcare. We know that. That is what these tax cuts are all about.

They are about the dignity of work. All work has dignity, whether you punch a clock or swipe a badge, whether you work on a salary or work for tips, whether you are raising children, or whether you are caring for aging parents. Raising children is work. Raising children is work. It is a hell of a lot more work than moving money from one overseas bank account to another or checking the balance in your stock portfolio.

That didn't stop Senator MCCONNELL and the Republican majority 2 or 3 years ago from rewarding the CEOs and hedge fund managers and Swiss bank account holders. We all remember what happened. MITCH MCCONNELL—and the lobbyists lining up down the hall—and

the politicians who always do their bidding passed their tax cut for the wealthy and corporations that outsource jobs. You know what they promised? They promised it would all trickle down and have more jobs and workers in Savannah—the hometown of the Senator from Georgia—that there will be more jobs and the workers would get more pay and the companies would invest more in the workforce.

Well, it didn't exactly happen that way. They kept their money for themselves. They spent that money on stock buybacks. Unsurprisingly, where did that money go? It goes in the pockets, mostly, of executives.

Now, this year, without a single vote from Republicans in Congress, we passed tax cuts for everyone else. It is a pretty simple contrast.

Whose side are you on? Do you want tax cuts for billionaires and corporations—that is what they did 4 years ago; that is what the President and the Congress did 4 years ago—or do you want tax cuts for working families? That is what Senator WARNOCK's and Senator OSSOFF's and President Biden's elections meant in November and January of this year; that instead of more tax cuts for the richest people in the country—though that bill, 70 percent of the tax cuts or the benefits went to the richest 1 percent—now we are seeing our tax cut goes to 90 percent of the families in this country.

Every single month we are showing parents and workers we are on your side. We will not stop fighting to make sure parents' hard work pays off for years to come.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia.

Mr. WARNOCK. Mr. President, I first want to say thank you to Senators BROWN, BENNET, and BOOKER for keeping a spotlight on this issue. I must admit, however, on this issue, when I say Senators BROWN, BENNET, and BOOKER, I think about the multiple choice questionnaires we got in school, and I am wondering how a guy with a last name "Warnock" got to be a part of this effort, but I am grateful.

I want to get right to the point. There are many reasons to move this Build Back Better American package forward. We have to build back better. We have a historic opportunity to make landmark investments that will strengthen our families, our economy, our care infrastructure, including expanding Medicaid benefits to more than 4 million Americans. We have got 600,000 Georgians in the Medicaid gap. We have got to provide critical debt relief for small farmers who have taken a financial hit during the pandemic. All of these things are covered in this Build Back Better agenda.

But the other top priority of mine, and why we are all here today, is that we have a chance to extend the expanded child tax credit. We have already seen it making a difference in the lives of over 2.2 million children just in Georgia alone.

I want to be clear about who this tax cut helps because people who have no vision engage in division, and sometimes when we are discussing these policies, we need to slow down and make sure folk know exactly whom we are talking about.

Ninety-seven percent—97 percent—of American families with children would benefit from this tax cut. After we passed the American Rescue Plan, we significantly expanded the child tax credit and the earned income tax credit.

To put more money in the pockets of working families, I remember that Senator BOOKER—actually, Senator BENNET called me from his car. He was on his way back home. I had just gotten elected, and just a few short months after I got elected, we passed the American Rescue Plan because we won the majority and were able to do this. Senator BROWN said to me: RAPHAEL, this is one of the best days of my career because we were able to pass the American Rescue Plan with all of these amazing provisions, and this provision alone is transformational. Experts have said that this investment that we made earlier this year would cut child poverty in half nationwide. Think about that. One provision. Just giving ordinary people, hard-working families, a break cuts child poverty in half. This is good public policy.

But I will tell you what would be bad public policy. It is bad public policy to cut child poverty in half one year and then go back the very next year and double child poverty. That is poor public policy. It is not right, and it is not smart.

The expanded child tax credit is helping Georgians. And do you want to know how I know that? I know because, as I am moving across the State, they are telling me. And it is no surprise, when you put an extra \$200 or \$300 in the bank account of ordinary people, working people, it makes a huge difference.

In my regular travels around the State, Georgians have told me how this tax cut for working families has made a difference in their lives, made their lives just a little bit easier, especially at the start of a new school year.

A few weeks ago, I was down in Columbus, GA, and I met with some of the hard-working families who receive this tax cut. And as I stand here, I think about Dante and Alicia, a couple I met down in Columbus, GA. Their daughter's name is London. And I asked them: What are you going to do with this monthly payment?

And they said it will help cover the costs of school clothes and brain-building extracurricular activities. They have a very active young daughter, very bright, London. She came to the meeting. And they said that: We wouldn't be able to afford these extracurricular activities, but this extra support, just this little lift, has made a difference in our personal economy, and it has made a difference for London.

I talked to Will, who works as a local hairdresser, and the monthly payment helps his 12-year-old daughter participate in karate tournaments, a development opportunity that family would not otherwise be able to afford.

In another conversation, I asked a Georgia mom of two young, growing boys: Where would this tax cut go?

I said: What are you going to do with this tax cut?

Do you know what she said to me?

She said: I am going to buy food and shoes.

You know, when you give ordinary folk a break, when you give them an extra \$200 or \$300 a month, you know, they go and buy extravagant things, like food and shoes and a coat for their kid.

They invest in extracurricular activities because they want to see their children do a little bit better than they did. And when they invest in their children, in a real sense, they invest in all of our children.

When you give folk who already have everything they need and then some, you give them that money, they hold on to that money. But when you give money to ordinary folks, they put that money right back into our local economies and into our small businesses.

Often the right thing to do is also the smart thing to do. It creates jobs, helps all of us. And so the expanded child tax credit grows and bolsters our economy from the bottom up.

I agree with Senator BROWN. I am just old enough to remember when folks were talking about trickle-down economics. And as a pastor, I have worked and conducted my ministry in these communities that have been hearing folks talk about trickle down for the last 40 years. The way to grow an economy is from the bottom up. The right thing to do is the smart thing to do.

The expanded child tax credit is changing lives right now, and we have a chance in this economic package we are working on to secure this investment for working Georgians and Americans into the future, and that is why I believe we should make it permanent, and I will keep advocating for that. But extending this critical tax cut right now is the right thing to do for working families. We ought to do it. We ought not just talk about it; we ought to do it.

The Scripture says, He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the Lord require . . . but that you do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with your God.

I see the face of God in the faces of our children.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. SMITH). The Senator from Texas.

VOTING RIGHTS

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, in June, our Democratic colleagues voted on their first and initial efforts to nationalize our State-run and local-run election system. That bill—this legislation, this effort—had been years in the

making. You know, in some ways, it is interesting to think about because back when our country was founded, there was a big debate on whether we should have a national government or whether we should have a Federal system. And, of course, we opted for a Federal system where the States retained their sovereignty within their authority, and all powers not delegated to the Federal Government were retained by the States and the people. That is the very definition of a Federal system.

So our colleagues on the Democratic side of the aisle have sort of renewed that debate again, trying to upend our Federal system of governance in favor of a national government, basically a command and control run out of Washington, DC.

When it comes to the takeover of our elections or to try to nationalize our elections, the initial proposal surfaced as a messaging bill in 2019 but over the years has undergone a number of makeovers. Each time, our colleagues have tried to sell this radical change in the way that our elections are run by different appeals.

They have talked about, well, this is important for election security. Remember the 2016 election, obviously—big concerns about Russian misinformation campaigns and cyber attacks, and election security was obviously at top of mind.

Then it was sold as a matter of regaining the voters' confidence that their vote would actually count.

Then it was sold as a way to remove the obstacles that prevented people from voting, which appears to be the current message.

Well, in 2020, in my State alone, but not just in Texas but across the country, we saw a record voter turnout. In my State, we said 66 percent of registered voters cast a ballot—11.3 million people.

The last time I had been on the ballot, 6 years previously, we only had 4.8 million voters, but we went from 4.8 to 11.3 in just 6 years. Now, part of that is because my State has been growing. Between 2010 and 2020, we have seen 4 million new Texans, either born or moved or made their way one way or another to our State.

But the 2020 election saw the largest voter turnout in 120 years—120 years. Well, clearly, if people are voting—including people of color, minorities—are voting at record levels, it is time to come up with a new sales pitch to try to sell this hijacking, really, of our State- and local-run elections.

So a number of States, including my State, have recently passed legislation to address voter confidence, to make sure that elections are fair and that people have an opportunity to vote who are legally qualified to do so. The phrase many of them used in that process was, they tried to make it easier to vote and harder to cheat. So that now has been the focus of our Democratic colleagues in trying to nationalize our

State- and local-run elections, which, by the way, is ensconced within the framework of the Constitution itself.

So our Democratic colleagues then attacked the State election laws and really just went over the top in terms of their description of what exactly was happening. Certainly it was not factual, but they said, in a number of cases, these changes in State election laws—and I am thinking of Georgia, Arizona, and Texas in particular—they said that they are the most sweeping attacks on the right to vote since the beginning of Jim Crow, and they said the only way to change that was to pass their election law.

Our colleagues talked about the bill in terms of protecting the right to vote and strengthening our democracy. Who could be against that? But the reality of the situation is very different, and the far-reaching provisions of the Democratic election takeover bill look nothing like the safeguards of democracy; they look more like a partisan power play.

In the end, the only thing bipartisan about the bill was the opposition. In both the House and Senate, Republicans and Democrats voted against the initial legislation, but our Democratic colleagues still refuse to recognize the reality of the vote and throw in the towel.

After the failed vote this summer, our colleagues on the Democratic side went back to the drawing board and came back with a new bill they call the Freedom to Vote Act. Well, if we needed any more proof that this is not a good-faith effort to strengthen our election but, rather, a partisan power play, the bill was introduced 1 week ago, and the Senate could end up voting on it as early as this week. That is hardly what I would call a deliberative process, one that even invites bipartisan debate and consideration.

So we may end up being required to vote on the bill—that is certainly the prerogative of the majority leader—with no real committee hearings, no real testimony from experts, and no indication that this bill is really being taken seriously other than to check a box and to send a message.

What has really been interesting is our colleagues on the left have said—they have tried to brand this as a compromise bill. I think that is primarily because of the objection of the Senator from West Virginia, Senator MANCHIN, who said he couldn't support the original bill. So they tried to come up with something that maybe looked more like a compromise but really isn't, and I will talk about that more in a second.

But this bill was not the result of bipartisan deliberations or consultation or communication even. As the Republican leader has noted, this so-called compromise bill is a compromise between the left and the radical left, which is hardly a compromise at all. But that is apparently the way that Leader SCHUMER decides to run the Senate, after all, passing a \$1.9 trillion

spending bill right after Joe Biden became President, with no Republican support, under the auspices of being COVID relief when only 10 percent of it actually had anything to do with COVID.

Well, the good news is we have done a few bipartisan things. We passed the Endless Frontier Act—our way of trying to address the challenge of China. We passed a bipartisan infrastructure bill. But now our colleagues on the other side of the aisle want to do it alone again, and they are trying to pass a bill that could end up costing taxpayers as much as \$5.5 trillion. A nominal figure is \$3.5 trillion, but right now, they are experiencing a lot of differences of opinion within their own ranks as to what is acceptable and what is not, and they certainly aren't talking to us.

But all the while, they have continued to work on a partisan effort to overrun our constitutional delegation, really, of the election system to State and local government. So no one should be fooled. This bill is not a compromise in any sense of the word. Just like its predecessor, this bill hijacks State constitutional power to make decisions on things like voter registration and early voting.

Actually, this morning in the Constitution Subcommittee, the Senator from Connecticut, Senator BLUMENTHAL, was talking about the fact that his State, Connecticut, did not have early in-person voting, but they have now passed a bill that provides for a referendum in Connecticut. If the referendum passes, then the State legislature may actually provide for early voting in person.

I would just tell you that the contrast between the rhetoric and the reality is pretty amazing because the Texas election law, passed by the State legislature just recently, provides for 17 days of early voting in person. In other words, there is a fulsome opportunity for anybody who is qualified to vote to cast their ballot in person or by mail if you qualify or on the day of the election. As you can see, with 66 percent of the registered voters actually taking advantage of that generous opportunity to cast their ballot, they did in historic numbers.

Well, there is a saying that “if it is not broke, don't fix it,” and there is nothing broke about our State- and local-run election systems. Certainly the guardrails are in place. If, for example, someone were to deny a minority voter the opportunity to cast a ballot or to make sure their ballot counted just like anybody else's, there is section 2 of the Voting Rights Act. In fact, the Biden Department of Justice has filed such a lawsuit against Georgia based on the changes in their voting laws. So there is plenty of opportunity to raise these issues in court should the Federal Government and should the Biden administration wish to challenge them, but the truth is, they are going to lose because what they have

tried to do is to change through litigation what they cannot do constitutionally through legislation.

Well, this so-called compromise bill, which is no compromise at all, contains invasive disclosure requirements that would attack the privacy of voters and chill free speech. It places handcuffs on States when it comes to drawing new legislative lines in redistributing, and it threatens action from the Attorney General if those standards aren't met. It makes it too difficult to root out fraud and protect the integrity of the vote by prohibiting voter ID for mail-in ballots and mandating drop boxes for ballots to be dropped by partisan advocates.

You know, people act like there is no such thing as voter fraud, but actually we have a famous case in Texas called Box 13 in Duval County, TX, where Coke Stevenson and LBJ—Lyndon Baines Johnson—were running for the Senate.

You know what they found is, because of the manipulation of the voter rolls by the county judge in Duval County, literally, they had people who were already buried in the cemetery vote in favor of Lyndon Baines Johnson in alphabetical order once they figured out how many votes they needed to cast.

That is just one famous example of voter fraud. Our Democratic colleagues act like it doesn't exist.

But what we did here in the Judiciary Committee a few months ago was the secretary of state for New Hampshire—he is a Democrat, and they don't have any early voting. It was interesting to hear him say that he thinks the single most important factor when it comes to people casting their ballot is people's confidence in the system that their ballot will actually be counted the way they voted. So all of these different times and conditions under which people can cast their ballot, he says, really don't have nearly as big an impact as just the confidence they have that their vote will be counted as they cast it.

And why our Democratic colleagues are opposed to voter ID is beyond me. We know Jimmy Carter and James Baker III—of course, Jimmy Carter, a former Democratic President; and James Baker III, a former prominent Secretary of State and Treasury Secretary. They had a commission to look at things like voter ID, and they actually recommended that voter ID would be one way to instill public confidence in the integrity of the vote.

You have to show your ID when you go through the Transportation Security Administration—TSA—to get on an airplane. You have to show an ID if you are going to buy a pack of cigarettes at a convenience store or six-pack of beer. I mean, we are accustomed to people being required to identify who they are. If you want to get into a Federal building, you have to show an ID.

So the idea that we should prohibit voter ID, to me, is ridiculous, and that

is one of the provisions in the Democrat substitute bill which is before us. It would prohibit the use of voter ID through mail-in ballots.

But that is just the beginning. One of the most outlandish—or I should say on top of what I have already talked about—provisions of this bill is the use of taxpayer funds for campaigns. Well, a lot of companies have matching programs for charitable giving. That is a positive, good thing. If an employee donates to a charity of their choice, many times their company will match that donation dollar for dollar. That is a positive thing.

But, here, what happens is, instead of a charity getting the money, it is a political candidate. In other words, our Democratic colleagues are recommending that for every dollar that is donated to a political candidate, the taxpayer kick in an extra 6 bucks.

Well, I know some of these campaigns that we have already run in recently get to be pretty expensive campaigns. But can you imagine that the taxpayers be asked to pony up \$6 for every \$1 that is contributed to the campaign? And is it really fair to ask taxpayers to subsidize the election of somebody they may disagree with?

It makes no sense to me. Well, this means that if someone donates \$200 to the preferred congressional candidate, the Federal Government could match with \$1,200. And it is not the Federal Government; it is the taxpayer, by the way.

Then there are the campaign vouchers, which will provide eligible voters with a \$25 voucher to donate to the campaign of their choosing. I am not making this up. This is what is in the legislation that, unfortunately, I don't think many people have read or understand.

It is easy to imagine a better use of taxpayer funding, whether infrastructure, help for people who still are in need as a result of the COVID pandemic. It could go to crime victims or support a response to a humanitarian crisis at the border, like we are seeing in Del Rio, TX. But, no, our Democratic colleagues want to put it into the political campaigns of the candidates of their choice.

Well, in addition to the rotten provisions that are maintained from the previous bill, there is even more. The bill places immense power in the office of General Counsel of the Federal Election Commission. He is an unelected official. It lowers the legal standard to overturn voting laws. And it makes election day a Federal holiday, even though the bill mandates 15 days of early voting, which, again, by the way, is less than the State legislature has provided for in Texas. We have 17 days of early voting.

Well, the truth is this is a so-called solution in search of a problem. The truth is there is no voter suppression epidemic.

During the Obama administration, their Justice Department brought four

lawsuits—four lawsuits—under section 2 of the Voting Rights Act. If you thought there was an epidemic of voter suppression, don't you think the Obama administration would have been more active and more vigilant?

Again, there is the fact that the 2020 elections saw the highest turnout in 120 years for all racial and ethnic groups. Over the last 4 years, States across the country undertook efforts to keep their elections free from fraud and foreign interference.

By the way, one of the conclusions following the 2016 election by the intelligence community was that the dispersed and diffused nature of our elections actually made it harder for Russia to impact the outcome because they would have had to do so in all 50 States.

If this was all run out of Washington, DC, and one black box appeared, it would probably be easier for them to concentrate their efforts on one location rather than 50 locations and increase the likelihood of their ability to influence the outcome.

Well, we have kicked in—here in Congress—hundreds of millions of dollars to help the States keep their elections free from fraud and foreign interference.

But under the Constitution, as currently written, each State has a constitutional authority to govern how their elections are run, and I think it is a good thing—subject to section 2 of the Voting Rights Act if someone commits a foul.

In my State, 29 million people are spread out across major cities and small towns alike. And what works well in our State may not make as much sense in a small, densely populated State like New Jersey, or large, sparsely populated State like Alaska.

That is why it is important that the States be the laboratories of democracy and try to be responsive to the needs of the people in their particular State, because we are not all the same. I believe the leaders in each State know best the unique circumstances of their constituents, and they are best suited to craft voting laws that prioritize both access and security.

A Federal Government hijacking of our State- and local-run election laws will not improve voter confidence in our elections. In fact, it will stir the very fears that Democrats claim they are trying to alleviate. But this isn't really new. It is just a repackaged and new effort to do the same thing, which is to nationalize our elections and run all of them out of Washington, DC, and to discourage commonsense measures, like voter ID, that help bolster public confidence in our elections and diminish the opportunity for people to cheat.

Well, no matter how many times we see this rebranded and new version of this Federal takeover of elections, I will continue to fight any effort to take the constitutional authority given to my State to run our own elections. I certainly am not going to turn

it over to the National Democratic Party.

The Senate will never green light politically motivated attempts to take over America's elections, and that is good thing. And we are not going to go down this road on this new, rehashed, modified, substitute effort to nationalize our Federal elections.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

#### CLIMATE LEGISLATION

Ms. STABENOW. Madam President, for more than 100 years, scientists have shown that burning fossil fuels creates carbon pollution that heats up and builds up in our atmosphere. It just doesn't go away. It just keeps building up more and more and more.

And for more than 100 years, we kept on burning fossil fuels anyway. In fact, we have given major—as a Congress—major, permanent tax benefits for the past 100 years to the fossil fuel industry. Now we are experiencing the full force and the huge cost of that choice, and it is growing even faster than many predicted.

This week, I published a report that outlined how extreme weather events are becoming more destructive, more dangerous, and more expensive, thanks to the climate crisis.

Last year, the U.S. Senate set an awful record. We had 22 separate billion-dollar weather and climate disasters in one year—the most ever. In total, these 22 disasters cost the Nation almost \$100 billion in damages, and 262 Americans lost their lives in severe storms and heat waves and wildfires.

2020 may have set a record, but, unfortunately, it is a record that is going to be broken probably this year. Over the past 5 years, American taxpayers have spent an average of \$126 billion a year in damages due to these disasters. And the total cost of these disasters over the last 15 years tops \$1 trillion, and growing every single day, every single year.

We are debating right now a budget—a Build Back Better Budget—and it involves investing in a number of important things over 10 years at about \$350 billion a year, and we are going to spend that very soon just on climate damage if we don't get ahead of this.

I know the Presiding Officer is leading on this in a very important way, which I thank you, for the issue around clean electricity policies. We have a lot of work to do. Nobody is going untouched. No State is untouched—from Montana to Mississippi, to Massachusetts, to Michigan.

Last week, President Biden was in Idaho surveying the terrible damage caused by wildfires. He said: "We can't continue to ignore reality."

He is right. The reality is carbon pollution is the root cause of the climate crisis. Pollution goes into the atmosphere. It doesn't leave. It just gathers there more and more and more and more, and we are seeing what is happening as a result of that.

If we don't combat the climate crisis now, the destruction and the deaths will continue to go up and up and up. If you think taking action is expensive, consider the cost of inaction.

Who pays the bill?

Well, we all do. We all pay the bill.

Then there is the personal cost. I am thinking of a landowner who lives on the same wooded acres his grandfather owned—or at least he did until a drought-fueled wildfire destroyed his home and the forest that surrounded it.

I am thinking of the small business that lost its roof and all of its inventory when a hurricane and the resulting storm surge hit a small beachside community.

I am thinking of all the Michigan growers I know who are one early freeze or dry season away from being unable to keep the family farm going, and I am thinking of those 262 families who lost someone they loved and will never be the same.

We owe it to those families to take action so that the climate crisis doesn't continue to cost people their lives and their livelihoods, and we owe it to American taxpayers to do all we can to avoid the worst impacts of this crisis.

We know what we need to do. We know what we need to do. We need to cut carbon pollution. That is what we need to do. There are big interests on the other side—oil and gas and coal interests. There is a lot of money—big special interests that keep trying to tell us this isn't real. You know, what you are seeing right in front of your face, what you are experiencing in your life, isn't real; it is pretend; it is not really happening. They put a lot of money into trying to stop what we are doing, but we have to take action. We have to take action. We know this is about carbon pollution; it is also about methane pollution and other greenhouse gases.

We can start doing something about it by passing the Build Back Better budget that the President has proposed. The Build Back Better budget will make electric vehicles more affordable and ensure that they are built right here in the United States. I want them built in Michigan, but at a minimum, we want them built in the United States. That is really important because we know that the transportation sector is the single largest source of carbon pollution that is driving climate change. Electric vehicles are a major part of the solution but not the only one, but they are a major part of it.

The question is not whether they will be built; it is where they will be built—whether they are going to be built in China, where they are spending over \$100 billion right now to capture the entire market, including electric batteries as well as the vehicles, or whether we are going to make it in America.

My goal is to make these vehicles in America. I have often said that Michigan workers are the best in the world.

I believe that. Under the Build Back Better budget, they will lead this world. American workers will lead the world if we are smart about doing what we need to do to invest in America.

The Build Back Better budget also provides clean energy tax incentives, and it funds clean energy procurement so we can make the electricity we need to power the vehicles without carbon pollution. It helps ensure that the technologies we need to transition to clean energy are built right here in the United States by providing tax credits for manufacturers to retool and build new plants to produce advanced energy parts.

It will hold polluters accountable and make sure they are held responsible for their actions. It will invest in important clean electricity policies. It will invest in climate-smart agriculture so that farmers and ranchers and foresters can continue to be an even bigger part of the solution, and it will restore our forests and make them more resilient to wildfires.

The Build Back Better budget, alongside the bipartisan infrastructure package, which is also very important, will make our infrastructure more resilient and tackle the main driver of the climate crisis: carbon pollution.

Best of all, these investments will also create millions of good-paying American jobs. That is the great part. As we are transitioning in Michigan, we are seeing jobs that are being created as part of the clean energy economy.

It is true that these policies represent significant investments, but it is also true that the cost of inaction is much, much higher. Inaction has consequences—so many different consequences—for us, for our children, for our grandchildren, and we can't afford those consequences. We just can't afford those consequences anymore.

So, on behalf of all of our children, on behalf of our grandchildren, now is the time to act. We must take this moment because we are running out of time. We must take this moment to act to address the pollution that is creating this climate crisis. We can do it—we know what to do—but now is the time to act and get it done.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

#### BORDER SECURITY

Mr. CRUZ. Madam President, I rise today to call attention to the humanitarian crisis that is happening right now in the State of Texas, another one happening right now in Del Rio, TX—yet another consequence of President Biden's and Vice President HARRIS's dangerous refusal to enforce our laws or to protect our border, a refusal that is causing people to die; that is causing young girls to be trafficked; that is causing drugs to pour into our State; and that is causing our communities to become much less safe.

Right now, thousands of Haitians are camped under a bridge in Del Rio, TX,

after illegally entering our country. Six days ago, I went down to Del Rio myself to see firsthand what was going on and why this was happening. The sheer number of people under the bridge took my breath away. People were struggling enormously, including infants, including young children, and I learned from authorities on the ground what had happened and that this was a man-made crisis. To understand what occurred, we have to go back to September 8.

On September 8 and in the weeks that preceded it, there were between 700 and 1,000 people under that bridge in Del Rio. That was about the traffic that was coming in each day illegally. Then, on September 8, the Biden administration made a political decision. There were some 900 Haitian illegal immigrants who were scheduled to board planes and be deported back to Haiti. Roughly, 85 percent of the illegal immigrants crossing at Del Rio are from Haiti originally. On September 8, the Biden administration canceled those planes. It informed those 900 Haitians that they would not be deported but that they would, instead, be allowed to stay in the United States, and what happened next is simple.

Those 900 picked up their phones, and they called their friends; they called their families; they texted their friends and families. Between the period of September 8, when the Biden administration canceled those flights back to Haiti and September 16—8 days later when I was in Del Rio—the 700 people under the bridge had become 10,503. That is what the total was the day I was there—10,503 packed in in deplorable conditions. They had already crossed into the United States. They were packed under that bridge because the Border Patrol lacked the capacity to process anything close to that number, and within a couple more days, the 10,503 had become 15,000 people.

To put that in perspective, the city of Del Rio has a population of 35,000 people. Nearly half the population of Del Rio was under that bridge. We have seen bread and water and toilet paper and basic necessities flying off store shelves in Del Rio, which wasn't expecting to have to handle such a massive influx of illegal immigrants.

The people of Del Rio are concerned; they are dismayed; they don't understand why the Federal Government refuses to enforce the law. Law enforcement is concerned and dismayed and doesn't understand why Joe Biden and KAMALA HARRIS won't enforce the law. The mayor in Del Rio is a Democrat, and he is frustrated and dismayed with the crisis the Federal Government has caused.

In the past month, I have traveled throughout South Texas, doing roundtables—sitting down with farmers and ranchers, sitting down with sheriffs and local law enforcement, sitting down with elected officials. A great many of the elected officials in South Texas are Democrats. South

Texas, historically, has been a very Democratic region of the State. To a person, every elected Democrat with whom I sat down was horrified at what was happening.

More than one elected Democrat in South Texas said to me: If the National Democratic Party is the party of open borders, I can't be for that.

You know, in this body, we listen to lots of elected officials from States that don't have a border with Mexico pontificate on how enforcing the border is somehow cruel. I will tell you what is cruel: having 10,503 people underneath a bridge, in shantytown conditions, where children, where women, where men are sleeping out in the elements and where even more come.

One of the things that strikes me about that Del Rio influx is many of those individuals had already been granted asylum in Mexico. So they had come from Haiti to Mexico. They had been granted asylum—they were living legally in Mexico—but when the Biden administration canceled the flights back to Haiti and word got out of, "Hey, come to Del Rio. It is olly olly oxen free. If you come to Del Rio, you can stay in America," it took 8 days for 700 people to become 10,503.

The Biden administration has also shut down five Border Patrol checkpoints in the Del Rio sector area of responsibility so they can redirect personnel just to process the mass of illegal immigrants under the bridge in Del Rio, and, of course, it is at those checkpoints that trucks carrying illegal immigrants or trucks carrying drugs into our country are caught.

So, with Joe Biden and KAMALA HARRIS pulling the personnel away from that, we know yet more illegal immigrants will stream into this country. We know yet more women will be raped and sexually assaulted by human traffickers. We know more children—more little boys and more little girls—will face physical assault and sexual assault from human traffickers. We also know that more heroin, more fentanyl—more illegal drugs—will pour into our States. And, by the way, not just the State of Texas, but every State in the Union will have more people die from illegal drugs because Joe Biden and KAMALA HARRIS refuse to enforce the law and are pulling law enforcement off of their job of protecting our communities.

On Monday, Department of Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas went down to Del Rio. Let me say I am glad he did. Joe Biden hasn't been to Del Rio. KAMALA HARRIS hasn't been to Del Rio. She is ostensibly the border control czar, but the czar can't be bothered to actually go to the southern border where the crisis is occurring.

Secretary Mayorkas, in Del Rio, said: "We are very concerned that Haitians who are taking this irregular migration path are receiving false information that the border is open."

Well, I wonder why they think the border is open. Maybe it is because the

Biden administration halted the deportation flights to Haiti. Maybe it is because Joe Biden is releasing Haitians who illegally cross the border at Del Rio into the United States at a staggering scale. Maybe it is because Joe Biden halted construction of the border wall the day that he became President. Maybe it is because Joe Biden reinstated the failed catch-and-release policy or maybe it is because Joe Biden, on day 1 of the Presidency, ended the incredibly successful "Remain in Mexico" policy, which was an international agreement that President Trump had negotiated with the Government of Mexico that provided that when people crossed illegally into Mexico, that they would remain in Mexico while their U.S. asylum case was proceeding.

That agreement was phenomenally successful—so much so that last year, in 2020, we had the lowest rate of illegal immigration in 45 years.

I want to point out to you that some of the Democratic Party, some in the media like to say: Well, this problem has been with us a long time. This problem is not Joe Biden's fault; it is not KAMALA HARRIS' fault. We can't solve the crisis at our southern border.

If you hear elected Democrats saying that, if you hear the corrupt corporate media saying that, you know they are not telling you the truth.

Why is that? Because last year, 12 months ago, we had the lowest rate of illegal immigration in 45 years. We know how to solve this crisis. The "Remain in Mexico" international agreement worked, and Joe Biden and KAMALA HARRIS, for political reasons, decided to tear up that international agreement and declare open season on our southern border.

This year, since Joe Biden has been President, over 1.2 million illegal immigrants have come into the United States. We are on pace for more than 2 million this year, which is the highest rate in 20 years.

Do you want to see how much policy and politics matter? We went from the lowest rate in 45 years last year to the highest rate in 21 years this year. And it is all because of politics, because Joe Biden and KAMALA HARRIS had made promises to the open-border radicals in their party.

I will tell you, I have been to the border. I have been to the Biden cages. For 4 years, Democrats went on and on and on. The corrupt corporate media went on and on and on about kids in cages. You couldn't turn on the evening news without hearing "kids in cages."

What they didn't tell you is that Barack Obama built those cages, and, today, under Joe Biden, the cages are bigger and they are more full than they were before.

Every Democrat who stood up and lamented "kids in cages" and the House of Representatives—Representative OCASIO-CORTEZ has a famous photo of her grasping her head by the kids in cages. Well, I am going to give a simple challenge for Representative OCASIO-

CORTEZ and for every Democrat in this body: Go see the Biden cages with your own eyes.

I have seen them—the Donna tent facility, with over 4,000 people, with little boys and little girls on top of each other. Just a couple of weeks ago, when I was in the Rio Grande Valley, the rate of COVID positivity in the Biden cages was over 22 percent.

And all the Democrats who talked about this, if they don't go, if they don't denounce the Biden cages, then they are telling you that they are hypocrites; that they didn't believe it when they said it; that they didn't care about it when they said it; that it was all politics. It wasn't about their kids.

Why does Joe Biden refuse to go to the Rio Grande Valley? Because if he goes, the TV cameras will come with him.

Why does KAMALA HARRIS, who is supposed to be the border czar—she is supposed to be in charge of this—why won't she go to the Rio Grande Valley? Because if she went, the TV cameras would come and would show the Biden cages.

And the Democrats are counting on the corrupt corporate media to suddenly say: Nothing to see here. Fifteen thousand Haitians under a bridge in Del Rio? Nothing to see here.

Does anyone want to know what Joe Biden's favorite ice cream flavor is? That is the news. Never mind 1.2 million illegal immigrants. Never mind when I took 19 Senators down to the border. We went out on the river and saw a man floating dead in the river who died trying to cross illegally. Never mind the South Texas farmers and ranchers, the moms who told me: I won't let my teenage kids go out on our ranch without being armed with a loaded firearm because there are so many human traffickers and narcotics traffickers that it is dangerous for them to go out on their own ranch.

Never mind the South Texas farmers and ranchers, who told me at roundtables how tired they are of going out and finding dead bodies.

Do you want to understand what is happening? You say there is no crisis? Come to Brooks County. I invite every Democrat here to Brooks County. Brooks County in South Texas, it is just north of the border. Brooks County, over and over and over again, there are dead bodies of illegal immigrants.

The traffickers who are bringing them in, they are not nice guys. They are not humanitarians. They don't give a damn. That means, if one of the illegal immigrants is a pregnant woman, is a young child, is elderly, is sick, they just abandon them. They leave them in the rough terrain in the summer heat, and, over and over again, the farmers and ranchers encounter dead bodies on their property, where the traffickers have abandoned them.

I ask you: Is that humane? Is that compassionate, that Joe Biden and KAMALA HARRIS policy that encourages, that puts people in harm's way and results in people dying?

When we were down at the border, we saw a young girl who had been gang raped by the human traffickers who had brought her to America. The rate of sexual assault is staggering, particularly among the girls and young women, so much so that a significant percentage of young women, before they take the harrowing trip with the traffickers, will implant a birth control because they know the odds of their being sexually assaulted are so great.

And I will tell you, as I was doing the roundtables, one of the things I saw also was the colored wrist bands. So the traffickers are global cartels that are criminals. They are vicious criminals. They charge anyone—a young man, a young woman, a little boy, a little girl—thousands of dollars, anywhere from 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, \$8,000 to cross into the United States.

By the way, do you know there is 100-percent operational control on the border—100 percent—on the southern side? Nobody crosses the border without the cartels' permission. If you do, they will kill you. Every person who crosses the border does so after paying the cartels, because you will be killed otherwise.

But often, when they come, they will cross, and they will end up at a stash house. I have been to those stash houses. I have been out on the midnight patrols with the Border Patrol. You go into those stash houses, and there are colored wrist bands that they put on the illegal immigrants, and the colors correspond to how many thousands of dollars they paid and how many thousands of dollars more they owe.

Often, when they get here, the cartels will say: Thank you for your x thousand dollars. We want y thousand more.

Tragically, it is at those stash houses in the United States where many of the sexual assaults occur. And so these immigrants, many of whom are young children, teenage children, when they get here, the Biden administration delivers them to their final destination. Joe Biden and KAMALA HARRIS and their administration are the last mile of the human trafficking network.

But for the 14-, 15-year-old boy who arrives in Atlanta, who arrives in New York, who arrives in Detroit, who arrives in Nashville—many of those 14- and 15-year-old boys owe thousands of dollars to the cartels, which means they arrive in your city—you might think Georgia is not a border State. But when teenagers are arriving in Atlanta owing thousands of dollars to the cartels, they work for the cartels, and the cartels know who their family is and where their family is, and they risk their mother or father being murdered if they don't work for the cartels to pay off the cartels.

The young women have it even worse. There are teenage girls who make the decision: I want to come to America; I want to come to the promised land.

We have been a beacon of hope to millions throughout our history. They don't realize they are stepping into Hell on Earth when the traffickers take them and then take them to a cartel facility in whatever city they end up in, where many of those teenage girls, still owing thousands of dollars to the cartels, have to work to pay off that debt by forced prostitution. Young girls forced into a life of sex slavery because the alternative is murder at the hand of the cartels. This is happening.

The fact that Joe Biden doesn't want to talk about it, the fact that KAMALA HARRIS claims it is not happening, the fact that the corrupt corporate media ignores it, it doesn't stop the fact that hundreds of thousands of people are suffering.

Mr. President, you and I are on the Senate Judiciary Committee. We have had four hearings in the Democrat-controlled Judiciary Committee on amnesty. In case the American people missed it, we get that the Democrats want amnesty for every illegal alien. That is not lost on anybody.

We haven't had a single hearing on the humanitarian crisis at the border. We haven't had a single hearing on the Biden cages.

Is it really the case that no Democrat in this Chamber cares about the children being assaulted, cares about the children catching COVID, cares about the illegal immigrants being released by Joe Biden and KAMALA HARRIS with COVID into our communities?

I get, politically, that this is an inconvenient topic to discuss. It is not the political narrative Democrats want to address. But every Democrat in this body needs to ask: Did you believe one word of the rhetoric you said during the Trump administration? Or was it all politics?

And, by the way, I saw the kids in cages, and I went to them directly when Obama was President. I saw them when Trump was President. I saw them when Biden was President. The difference last year is that we had the lowest numbers in 45 years. We were fixing the problem last year by enforcing the law.

Joe Biden has created this crisis through political divisions.

I make one final point: right now, 10 to 15,000 Haitian illegal immigrants under a bridge in Del Rio, TX. It is easy for Democrats to say: Well, that is not my problem.

It is easy for Democrats to say: I have never been to Del Rio. What do I care about those folks in South Texas.

I ask you: How would this issue be different if those illegal immigrants—if their point of entry was Martha's Vineyard? How would this issue be different if their point of entry was Silicon Valley, perhaps right outside the headquarters of Google—15,000 illegal immigrants under bridges?

The corrupt corporate media doesn't care. The Democrats, I hope, will demonstrate that they do.

And I will tell you this: The American people care. What is happening at

our southern border is wrong, and it needs to end.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. OSOFF). The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. HASSAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### VOTE ON WHITE NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the White nomination?

Ms. HASSAN. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) is necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS).

The result was announced—yeas 80, nays 18, as follows:

#### [Rollcall Vote No. 373 Ex.]

##### YEAS—80

Baldwin	Grassley	Portman
Barrasso	Hagerty	Reed
Bennet	Hassan	Risch
Blackburn	Heinrich	Romney
Blumenthal	Hickenlooper	Rosen
Blunt	Hirono	Sanders
Booker	Hoeven	Sasse
Brown	Kaine	Schatz
Burr	Kelly	Schumer
Cantwell	King	Scott (SC)
Capito	Klobuchar	Shaheen
Cardin	Leahy	Sinema
Carper	Lee	Smith
Casey	Luján	Stabenow
Cassidy	Lummis	Tester
Collins	Manchin	Thune
Coons	Markey	Tillis
Cornyn	McConnell	Toomey
Cortez Masto	Menendez	Van Hollen
Cramer	Merkley	Warner
Crapo	Moran	Warnock
Duckworth	Murkowski	Warren
Durbin	Murphy	Whitehouse
Ernst	Murray	Wicker
Fischer	Ossoff	Wyden
Gillibrand	Padilla	Young
Graham	Peters	

##### NAYS—18

Boozman	Hyde-Smith	Paul
Braun	Inhofe	Rubio
Cotton	Johnson	Scott (FL)
Cruz	Kennedy	Shelby
Daines	Lankford	Sullivan
Hawley	Marshall	Tuberville

##### NOT VOTING—2

Feinstein	Rounds
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The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. KELLY).

Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table, and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

#### CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

#### CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 341, Florence Y. Pan, of the District of Columbia, to be United States District Judge for the District of Columbia.

Charles E. Schumer, Mazie Hirono, Sheldon Whitehouse, Jack Reed, Martin Heinrich, Michael F. Bennet, Jacky Rosen, Richard Blumenthal, Alex Padilla, John Hickenlooper, Kirsten E. Gillibrand, Tina Smith, Tim Kaine, Ben Ray Lujan, Chris Van Hollen, Jeff Merkley.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Florence Y. Pan, of the District of Columbia, to be United States District Judge for the District of Columbia, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) and the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. MANCHIN) are necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAPO), the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM), the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. PAUL), the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS), and the Senator from Alabama (Mr. SHELBY).

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 66, nays 27, as follows:

#### [Rollcall Vote No. 374 Ex.]

##### YEAS—66

Baldwin	Grassley	Portman
Barrasso	Hassan	Reed
Bennet	Heinrich	Romney
Blumenthal	Hickenlooper	Rosen
Booker	Hirono	Sanders
Brown	Kaine	Schatz
Burr	Kelly	Schumer
Cantwell	King	Scott (SC)
Capito	Klobuchar	Shaheen
Cardin	Leahy	Sinema
Carper	Lee	Smith
Casey	Luján	Stabenow
Collins	Markey	Tester
Coons	McConnell	Tillis
Cornyn	Menendez	Toomey
Cortez Masto	Merkley	Van Hollen
Cotton	Murkowski	Warner
Duckworth	Murphy	Warnock
Durbin	Murray	Warren
Ernst	Ossoff	Whitehouse
Fischer	Padilla	Wyden
Gillibrand	Peters	Young

##### NAYS—27

Blackburn	Cruz	Inhofe
Blunt	Daines	Johnson
Boozman	Hagerty	Kennedy
Braun	Hawley	Lankford
Cassidy	Hoeven	Lummis
Cramer	Hyde-Smith	Marshall

Moran	Sasse	Thune
Risch	Scott (FL)	Tuberville
Rubio	Sullivan	Wicker

##### NOT VOTING—7

Crapo	Manchin	Shelby
Feinstein	Paul	
Graham	Rounds	

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 66, the nays are 27.

The motion is agreed to.

#### EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Florence Y. Pan, of the District of Columbia, to be United States District Judge for the District of Columbia.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois.

#### LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. DURBIN. I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

#### MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### NOTICE OF A TIE VOTE UNDER S. RES. 27

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to print the following letter in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

U.S. SENATE, COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS,

Washington, DC, September 22, 2021.

To the Secretary of the Senate:

PN541, the nomination of Jennifer B. Sass, of Maryland, to a Member of the Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigations Board, having been referred to the Committee on Environment and Public Works, with a quorum present, has voted on the nominations as follows—

On the question of reporting the nomination without recommendation, 10 ayes to 10 noes.

In accordance with section 3, paragraph (1)(A) of S. Res. 27 of the 117th Congress, I hereby give notice that the Committee has not reported the nomination because of a tie vote, and ask that this notice be printed in the Record pursuant to the resolution.

THOMAS R. CARPER,

Chair.

#### HONORING OFFICER CHRISTOPHER NEIL OBERHEIM

Ms. DUCKWORTH. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to the remarkable life of Officer Christopher

Neil Oberheim, a 20-year veteran of the Illinois police force who was fatally shot on May 19, 2021, while serving in the line of duty. Officer Oberheim started his remarkable career at the Decatur Police Department before transferring to the Champaign Police Department in 2008.

Throughout his years of protecting and serving, Officer Oberheim earned two medals of valor and countless letters of commendation for his courageous acts of selfless bravery. He will be remembered by his colleagues as a model officer and someone who looked forward to making memories with his fellow officers at the annual State softball tournament hosted by the Police Benevolent and Protective Association of Illinois.

Officer Oberheim was not only a dedicated law enforcement officer, but also a devoted father and citizen who was loved and respected in his community. Officer Oberheim invested a great deal of time off duty to coaching several successful girls' softball teams, and the Monticello Sages Softball team paid tribute to his legacy as a coach and mentor: "Chris Oberheim was the ultimate girl dad and was so proud of his girls. He has given so much to the program and we are blessed to have known him."

Officer Oberheim was tragically killed in the line of duty while fulfilling his oath to serve and protect the people of the city of Champaign, and I am grateful for his years of service. He leaves behind his wife Amber and their 4 daughters Hannah, Avery, Addison, and Aubree. May his service, sacrifice, and kind spirit serve as an inspiration to us all.

#### 80TH ANNIVERSARY OF VANCE AIR FORCE BASE

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, on Friday, September 17, 2021, Vance Air Force Base celebrated its 80th anniversary. On this day, we honored the community, leadership, cadre of instructors, and over 35,000 pilots Vance has trained since 1941. Vance AFB is the top pilot-producing base for 2 years running and enables our Nation to provide and defend global power projection.

Vance Air Force Base's history dates back to 1941, originally founded as Air Corps Basic Flying School in Enid, OK. After World War II, the base reopened as a permanent facility on August 26, 1948, and became Vance AFB on July 9, 1949. The base is named in honor of Lt Col Leon Robert Vance, Jr., a native of Enid, who posthumously received the Medal of Honor for gallantry in action over France on June 5, 1944.

For 80 years, Vance has served as the model for empowering the future of the U.S. Air Force through innovation and focuses on supporting flight operations everyday. The 71st Flying Training Wing operates over 200 aircraft, conducting more than 50,000 sorties annually, and logging more than 74,000

flight hours in the T-1A Jayhawk, T-6A Texan II, and T-38C Talon. Soon, Vance will add the T-7 Red Hawk to its training aircraft fleet. The base graduates 370 exceptional U.S. Air Force and allied student pilots from pilot training each year.

Vance is lucky because it benefits from outstanding community support and partnerships. The base supports more than 1,400 civilian employees and 1,400 military members and their families in the local area. Vance has a remarkable \$381.2 million impact on the local community. On September 17, thousands of friends and families who make the Vance mission a success gathered to celebrate the history and future of the base.

Vance strives to accomplish its mission every day to deliver the world's best pilots, develop resilient airmen and families, deploy combat ready warriors, and demonstrate Vance culture. I am proud that Vance will continue to train the finest airmen for the finest Air Force in the world. On behalf of my colleagues and the entire U.S. Senate, I want to congratulate the Vance AFB community on 80 years of excellence in service to our Nation. "Vance Proud!"

#### 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE GREAT PESHTIGO FIRE

Ms. BALDWIN. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize a grave day in Wisconsin's history, the 150th anniversary of the "Great Peshtigo Fire." On this sesquicentennial anniversary, we remember the great city of Peshtigo, WI, that was completely destroyed on October 8, 1871, in the largest fire in U.S. history.

A community surrounded by dense forest, the city of Peshtigo was first settled in 1838. Located off the western shore of Green Bay in Marinette County, the area was first inhabited by Menominee and Ho-Chunk Native Americans. Sustained by lumber, shipping, and railroad interests, by the end of 1871, it was the tenth largest city in Wisconsin.

Historians and survivors of the fire theorize that the blaze was started by railroad workers who were cutting trees and burning debris outside of Peshtigo. A combination of a prolonged drought, a heavy reliance on wooden buildings, and 100-mph winds aligned to create a firestorm that reached 3 miles across and 1,000 feet high. Over the course of the night, the fire scorched over 1.2 million acres and caused an estimated \$169 million in damages. Between 1,200 and 2,500 people lost their lives. The fire's complete destruction of local records prevented an accurate death toll. An estimated 350 victims lie in a mass grave in Peshtigo, victims who could not be identified because they were either burned beyond recognition or because those who could identify them perished, too.

Although the Great Peshtigo Fire has been well documented, little has been written about the crucial role Na-

tive Americans played in preventing further loss of life among European settlers. One of the most compelling stories involves Abraham Place, who traveled on foot to Wisconsin from Vermont in 1837 to build a homestead in the Sugar Bush neighborhood just outside of Peshtigo. He married a Menominee woman, and together with their children, they tended one of the largest farms in the area. While marrying a Native-American woman was socially acceptable when Place first settled there, attitudes had changed by 1871, and he was scorned by his fellow settlers.

The Native Americans he regularly welcomed to his home warned him of the impending danger of fire after months of little to no rain and helped him create a 3-foot-deep firebreak around his farm. His European neighbors dismissed his precaution as the actions of a crazy man who had married a Native American. Mrs. Place's in-laws then spent hours placing dozens of wet blankets on the roof of their house to prevent its destruction. Their home was one of the few buildings still standing on the morning of October 9.

Many of the same neighbors who had ridiculed them ran to their house or died trying. Survivors found the bodies of 35 residents who never made it to the farm. The hundred or so refugees who arrived safely at the Place home found a make-shift hospital where they could nurse their wounds and recuperate. Some stayed for weeks, their earlier disdain cured by necessity.

In the days following the Peshtigo fire, survivors emerged from the Peshtigo River and other safe havens untouched by the flames to look for missing loved ones and to begin to rebuild their lives. As word of the devastation spread, donations of food, clothing, and money poured in from across the State, the Nation, and several foreign countries. This selfless, unified show of support empowered the people of Peshtigo to rebuild their homes and restore their community.

Occurring on the same night as the Great Chicago Fire, the Peshtigo fire has been largely forgotten, even though the Wisconsin death toll is estimated to be seven times that of the Chicago tragedy. That is why I join Peshtigo residents in remembering the time when prejudices that turned neighbors into enemies were set aside in the midst of unimaginable hardship. And I applaud their efforts to pause this October 8 to remember this inconceivable catastrophe, commemorate its victims and honor the resilience of those who worked so hard to rebuild this city from the ashes of total devastation into the tranquil community of today.

#### TRIBUTE TO DOROTHY SHIRLEY LICHT

Mr. REED. Mr. President, today I want to honor a former First Lady of Rhode Island, Mrs. Dorothy Shirley

Licht, as she celebrates her 100th birthday on Monday, September 27, 2021.

Dorothy Shirley Krauss was born in Providence, RI, in 1921. She spent much of her life dedicated to others—raising three children, working to enrich her community, and supporting her late husband, the former Governor of Rhode Island Frank Licht, in his political and judicial endeavors.

In 1949, she married Frank Licht, a Rhode Islander who graduated from Brown University and Harvard Law School and served as a State senator in Rhode Island from 1949 until being sworn in as an associate justice of the Rhode Island Superior Court in 1956.

After 12 steadfast years on the bench, Licht thrust himself into an uphill gubernatorial fight against the incumbent Governor and my former colleague, the late Senator John Chafee. Following a hard-fought campaign, Licht secured an underdog win in 1968, and with Dorothy at his side, he became the first Jewish Governor in Rhode Island's history. During Governor Licht's time in office, he focused on advancing mental healthcare, strong environmental protections, and bold economic reforms. With strong conviction and courage, he pushed through an unpopular tax plan that would help guide Rhode Island out of a devastating financial crisis.

No public servant can be successful without the strong support of their loved ones. Through tough races, long hours, and challenging times, Dorothy gifted to the people of Rhode Island a model for strong and eloquent leadership. During her time as First Lady and in the decades since, Dorothy held the advancement of the arts and humanities close to her heart. Her work to elevate art and culture across our community is exemplified by her past service on the boards of the Rhode Island State Council on the Arts, the New England Foundation for the Arts, and the Rhode Island Symphony. Dorothy's compassion for helping those in need is perhaps best shown through her role as an honorary board member of the Rhode Island Food Bank, a role she still holds today.

Through all of the highs of Dorothy's life, she has not been immune to loss. She has endured the immeasurable burden of burying both her loving husband Frank many years ago, as well as her eldest daughter Beth, who passed unexpectedly earlier this year. Still, Dorothy is strengthened and supported by her beloved family who join with me to celebrate this milestone, including her two surviving daughters Carol and Judy, her eight grandchildren, and her four great-grandchildren, as well as her nephew, former Lieutenant Governor Richard Licht.

It is my distinct honor to recognize Dorothy for her life of service to Rhode Island, her commitment to her family, and this momentous occasion of her 100th birthday.

## ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

### TRIBUTE TO MAJOR GENERAL JERRY HUMBLE

• Mr. PAUL. Mr. President, on October 16, 2021, the Colonel Benjamin Logan Chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution will present a special award to a great modern-day patriot with roots in Russellville, KY.

Retired U.S. Marine Corps Maj. Gen. Jerry Humble was born in Russell County, KY, but being the son and grandson of Methodist ministers, he and his family moved several times, eventually settling in Russellville, KY, where he attended high school and lettered in four sports. He accepted a football scholarship to Western Kentucky University, in my hometown of Bowling Green, where he was defensive MVP his senior year.

Logan County native, Margaret Jane Hollingsworth, his high school sweetheart—and fellow WKU graduate—became Jerry's wife in 1968 and began an amazing partnership with him in service to their country.

In the midst of the Vietnam war, Jerry enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps and was commissioned as a second lieutenant. Beyond Vietnam, his 34-year career included service in Desert Storm and other operations, including commanding Marine Forces in Korea. He was recognized with the Defense Distinguished Service Medal, Navy Distinguished Service Medal, Legion of Merit with two Gold Stars and Combat V, Meritorious Service Medal with one Gold Star, Joint Service Commendation Medal with oak leaf cluster, Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal with one Gold Star, Navy Achievement Medal, and Combat Action Ribbon.

His military career has been featured in a number of books and publications, he has appeared on a host of national media broadcasts, and he has testified multiple times before the U.S. Congress.

Jerry's commitment to our Nation did not end in his retirement. Many public and private organizations have benefited from his leadership, including serving as the cabinet secretary for homeland security for the State of Tennessee.

It is highly fitting that this distinguished U.S. Marine Corps veteran will receive the Colonel Benjamin Logan Award from his fellow Logan Countians and that we further honor him by this permanent tribute to his exemplary service to our Nation as recorded in these remarks. •

### MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

At 10:03 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bill, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 5305. An act making continuing appropriations for the fiscal year ending Sep-

tember 30, 2022, and for providing emergency assistance, and for other purposes.

At 12:41 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Alli, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bill, without amendment:

S. 1828. An act to amend the Central Intelligence Agency Act of 1949 to authorize the provision of payment to personnel of the Central Intelligence Agency who incur qualifying injuries to the brain, to authorize the provision of payment to personnel of the Department of State who incur similar injuries, and for other purposes.

The message further announced that the House has agreed to the following concurrent resolution, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H. Con. Res. 41. Concurrent resolution authorizing the use of the Capitol Grounds for the National Peace Officers Memorial Service and the National Honor Guard and Pipe Band Exhibition.

### MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

The following bills were read the second time, and placed on the calendar:

S. 2788. A bill to reauthorize the National Flood Insurance Program.

S. 2789. A bill making continuing appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2022, and for providing emergency assistance, and for other purposes.

S. 2809. A bill to protect social security benefits and military pay and require that the United States Government to prioritize all obligations on the debt held by the public in the event that the debt limit is reached.

H.R. 5305. An act making continuing appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2022, and for providing emergency assistance, and for other purposes.

### MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME

The following bills were read the first time:

H.R. 5305. An act making continuing appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2022, and for providing emergency assistance, and for other purposes.

S. 2809. A bill to protect social security benefits and military pay and require that the United States Government to prioritize all obligations on the debt held by the public in the event that the debt limit is reached.

### EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC-2005. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Air Plan Approval; Arizona; Pinal County Air Quality Control District" (FRL No. 8760-02-R9) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 13, 2021; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2006. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Air Plan Approval; Nebraska; Revisions to Title 129 of the Nebraska Administrative Code; General Conformity" (FRL No.

8709-02-R7) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 13, 2021; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2007. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Air Plan Approval; Ohio; Infrastructure SIP Requirements for the 2015 Ozone NAAQS" (FRL No. 8823-02-R5) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 13, 2021; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2008. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Air Plan Approval; OR; Updates to Adoption by Reference of Federal Provisions" (FRL No. 8738-02-R10) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 13, 2021; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2009. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Interstate Transport Prongs 1 and 2 for the 2010 Sulfur Dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>) Standard for Kansas and Nebraska" (FRL No. 8705-02-R7) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 13, 2021; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2010. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Air Plan Approval; Illinois; 2008 Ozone Moderate VOC RACT for Chicago" (FRL No. 8822-02-R5) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 13, 2021; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2011. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; New York; Ozone Season NO<sub>x</sub> Controls for Simple Cycle and Regenerative Combustion Turbines" (FRL No. 8832-02-R2) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 13, 2021; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2012. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Air Plan Approval; TN; Removal of Vehicle I/M Program for the Middle Tennessee and Hamilton County Areas" (FRL No. 8839-02-R4) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 13, 2021; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2013. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; District of Columbia; Emissions Statement Certification for the 2015 Ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standard" (FRL No. 8730-02-R3) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 13, 2021; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2014. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of State Plans for Designated Facilities; New York; Revision to Section 111(d) State Plan for MSW Landfills" (FRL No. 8851-02-R2) re-

ceived in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 13, 2021; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2015. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Significant New Use Rules on Certain Chemical Substances (19-2.F)" (FRL No. 7486-01-OCSPP) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 13, 2021; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2016. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Significant New Use Rules on Certain Chemical Substances (20-8.B)" (FRL No. 8146-02-OCSPP) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 13, 2021; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2017. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Significant New Use Rules on Certain Chemical Substances (19-1.5e)" (FRL No. 8000-02-OCSPP) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 13, 2021; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2018. A communication from the Associate Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Air Plan Approval; Maine and New Hampshire; 2015 Ozone NAAQS Interstate Transport Requirements" (FRL No. 8860-02-R1) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 13, 2021; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2019. A communication from the Associate Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Severe Area Submission Requirements for the 2008 Ozone NAAQS; California; Eastern Kern Nonattainment Area" (FRL No. 8728-02-R9) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 13, 2021; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2020. A communication from the Associate Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Air Plan Approval; Ohio; Ohio Permit Fee Rule Removal" (FRL No. 8833-02-R5) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 13, 2021; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2021. A communication from the Associate Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; District of Columbia; Regional Haze State Implementation Plan for the Second Implementation Period and Reasonably Available Control Technology for Major Stationary Sources of Nitrogen Oxides; Technical Amendment" (FRL No. 8837-02-R3) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 13, 2021; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2022. A communication from the Associate Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Air Plan Approval; Pennsylvania; Emissions Statement Rule Certification for the 2015 Ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standard" (FRL No.

8845-02-R3) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 13, 2021; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2023. A communication from the Associate Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Air Plan Approval; North Carolina; Revision to Approved Motor Vehicle Emissions Budgets" (FRL No. 8852-02-R4) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 13, 2021; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2024. A communication from the Associate Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Air Plan Approval; North Carolina; Monitoring; Recordkeeping; Reporting" (FRL No. 8859-02-R4) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 13, 2021; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2025. A communication from the Acting Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Alabama: Final Approval of State Underground Storage Tank Program Revisions, Codification, and Incorporation by Reference" (FRL No. 8784-01-R4) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 13, 2021; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2026. A communication from the Acting Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Tennessee: Final Approval of State Petroleum Underground Storage Tank Program Revisions, Codification, and Incorporation by Reference" (FRL No. 8817-01-R4) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 13, 2021; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2027. A communication from the Acting Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Maryland; Emissions Statement Requirement for the 2015 Ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standard" (FRL No. 8876-02-R3) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 13, 2021; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2028. A communication from the Acting Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "National Priorities List" (FRL No. 8887-01-OLEM) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 13, 2021; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2029. A communication from the Acting Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Air Plan Approval; Texas; Clean Air Act Requirements for Nonattainment New Source Review and Emission Statements for the 2015 Ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standards" (FRL No. 8893-02-R6) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 13, 2021; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2030. A communication from the Acting Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Air Plan Approval; Illinois; Prevention of Significant Deterioration" (FRL No. 8919-02-R5) received in the Office of

the President of the Senate on September 13, 2021; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2031. A communication from the Wildlife Biologist, Division of Migratory Bird Management, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Migratory Bird Hunting; Final 2021–22 Frameworks for Migratory Bird Hunting Regulations, and Special Procedures for Issuance of Annual Hunting Regulations" (RIN1018-BE34) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 13, 2021; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2032. A communication from the Director of Congressional Affairs, Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Regulatory Guide (RG) 1.243 Rev 0, Safety-Related Steel Structures and Steel-Plate Composite (SC) Walls for other than Reactor Vessels and Containments" received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 13, 2021; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2033. A communication from the Director of Congressional Affairs, Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Regulatory Guide (RG) 3.76 Rev 0, Implementation of Aging Management Requirements for Spent Fuel Storage Renewals" received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 13, 2021; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2034. A communication from the Director of Congressional Affairs, Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Regulatory Guide (RG) 1.243 Rev 0, Safety-Related Steel Structures and Steel-Plate Composite (SC) Walls for other than Reactor Vessels and Containments" received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 13, 2021; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2035. A communication from the Director of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Reactor Regulation, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Final Safety Evaluation of Technical Specifications Task Force Traveler TSTF-554, 'Revise Reactor Coolant Leakage Requirements'" received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 13, 2021; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2036. A communication from the Director of Congressional Affairs, Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Regulatory Guide (RG) 3.76 Rev 0, Implementation of Aging Management Requirements for Spent Fuel Storage Renewals" received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 13, 2021; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2037. A communication from the Acting Chief of the Legal Processing Division, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Special Funding and Benefit Limitation Rules for Single-Employer Defined Benefit Pension Plans under the CARES Act" (Notice 2020-61) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 13, 2021; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-2038. A communication from the Director of the Legal Processing Division, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Implementation of

Nonresident Alien Deposit Interest Regulations" (Notice 2020-15) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 13, 2021; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-2039. A communication from the Director of the Legal Processing Division, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Administrative, Procedural, and Miscellaneous" (Rev. Proc. 2020-26) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 13, 2021; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-2040. A communication from the Director of the Legal Processing Division, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Section 911(d) (4) - Waiver Revenue Procedure with regards to COVID-19" (Rev. Proc. 2020-27) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 13, 2021; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-2041. A communication from the Director of the Legal Processing Division, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Guidance on the Employee Retention Credit under Section 3134 of the Code and on Miscellaneous Issues Related to the Employee Retention Credit" (Notice 2021-49) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 13, 2021; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-2042. A communication from the Acting Branch Chief of the Legal Processing Division, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Automatic method change procedures for method changes to comply with section 1.451-3 and/or section 1.451-8 (TD 9941)" (Rev. Proc. 2021-34) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 13, 2021; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-2043. A communication from the Acting Branch Chief of the Legal Processing Division, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Gross receipts safe harbor under sections 448(c) and 6033 of the Internal Revenue Code for purposes of determining eligibility to claim the employee retention credit" (Rev. Proc. 2021-33) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 13, 2021; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-2044. A communication from the Acting Chief of the Legal Processing Division, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Administrative Relief with Respect to Employment Tax Deadlines Applicable to Employers Affected by the Ongoing Coronavirus (COVID-19) Disease 2019 Pandemic" (Notice 2020-65) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 13, 2021; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-2045. A communication from the Acting Chief of the Legal Processing Division, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Safe Harbor Explanations - Eligible Rollover Distributions" (Notice 2020-62) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 13, 2021; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-2046. A communication from the Acting Chief of the Legal Processing Division, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) Transition Relief under Internal Revenue Code Section 51" (Notice 2021-43) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 13, 2021; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-2047. A communication from the Director of the Legal Processing Division, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Educator Expense Deduction under Section 62(a)(2)" (Rev. Proc. 2021-15) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 13, 2021; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-2048. A communication from the Acting Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act, the certification of a proposed license amendment for the export of defense articles, including technical data and defense services to Australia in the amount of \$100,000,000 or more (Transmittal No. DDTC 21-023); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-2049. A communication from the Acting Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act, the certification of a proposed license amendment for the export of defense articles, including technical data and defense services to the UK in the amount of \$50,000,000 or more (Transmittal No. DDTC 20-067); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-2050. A communication from the Acting Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act, the certification of a proposed license amendment for the export of defense articles, including technical data and defense services to Australia in the amount of \$100,000,000 or more (Transmittal No. DDTC 21-034); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-2051. A communication from the Secretary of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, an annual report on mining activities as required by the Mine Improvement and New Emergency Response Act of 2006; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-2052. A communication from the Secretary of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a petition to add workers at the Superior Steel Co. in Carnegie, Pennsylvania, to the Special Exposure Cohort; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-2053. A communication from the Secretary of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a petition to add workers at the Savannah River Site, in Aiken, South Carolina, to the Special Exposure Cohort; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

## REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. REED, from the Committee on Armed Services, without amendment:

S. 2792. An original bill to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2022 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 117-39).

By Mr. CARPER, from the Committee on Environment and Public Works, without amendment:

S. 233. A bill to designate the Rocksprings Station of the U.S. Border Patrol located on West Main Street in Rocksprings, Texas, as the "Donna M. Doss Border Patrol Station".

S. 1226. A bill to designate the United States courthouse located at 1501 North 6th

Street in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, as the "Sylvia H. Rambo United States Courthouse", and for other purposes.

S. 2126. A bill to designate the Federal Office Building located at 308 W. 21st Street in Cheyenne, Wyoming, as the "Louisa Swain Federal Office Building".

S. 2205. A bill to designate the United States courthouse located at 201 South Evans Street in Greenville, North Carolina, as the "Malcolm J. Howard United States Courthouse", and for other purposes.

### EXECUTIVE REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following executive reports of nominations were submitted:

By Ms. CANTWELL for the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

\*Grant T. Harris, of California, to be an Assistant Secretary of Commerce.

\*Alexander Hoehn-Saric, of Maryland, to be Chairman of the Consumer Product Safety Commission.

\*Alexander Hoehn-Saric, of Maryland, to be a Commissioner of the Consumer Product Safety Commission for a term of seven years from October 27, 2020.

\*Richard Trumka, Jr., of Maryland, to be a Commissioner of the Consumer Product Safety Commission for a term of seven years from October 27, 2021.

By Mr. CARPER for the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

\*Stephen A. Owens, of Arizona, to be a Member of the Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board for a term of five years.

\*Jeffrey M. Prieto, of California, to be an Assistant Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency.

\*Sylvia E. Johnson, of North Carolina, to be a Member of the Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board for a term of five years.

\*Nomination was reported with recommendation that it be confirmed subject to the nominee's commitment to respond to requests to appear and testify before any duly constituted committee of the Senate.

### INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mrs. MURRAY (for herself, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. BROWN, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. CASEY, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Ms. HASSAN, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. Kaine, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. LUJÁN, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. PADILLA, Ms. ROSEN, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. SCHATZ, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Ms. SMITH, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Ms. WARREN, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, and Mr. WYDEN):

S. 2791. A bill to prevent harassment at institutions of higher education, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. REED:

S. 2792. An original bill to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2022 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; from the

Committee on Armed Services; placed on the calendar.

By Mr. PETERS (for himself, Mr. LANKFORD, Mr. HAWLEY, and Ms. SINEMA):

S. 2793. A bill to authorize the Administrator of General Services to establish an enhanced use lease pilot program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. TUBERVILLE (for himself, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. SCOTT of Florida, Mr. BRAUN, Mr. BARRASSO, and Ms. LUMMIS):

S. 2794. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to increase automatic maximum coverage under the Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance program and the Veterans' Group Life Insurance program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Ms. CORTEZ MASTO (for herself, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. MERKLEY, and Mrs. FEINSTEIN):

S. 2795. A bill to require the Secretary of Homeland Security to use alternatives to detention for certain vulnerable immigrant populations, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. OSSOFF (for himself and Mr. GRASSLEY):

S. 2796. A bill to amend the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 to provide for the eligibility of rural community response pilot programs for funding under the Comprehensive Opioid Abuse Grant Program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. WARNER (for himself, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. WARNOCK, Mr. KAINE, and Mr. OSSOFF):

S. 2797. A bill to establish a program to provide low- and moderate-income first-time, first-generation homebuyers with access to affordable and sustainable wealth-building home loans; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. CRAPO (for himself, Mr. LUJÁN, Mr. RISCH, Ms. ROSEN, Mr. BOOKER, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Mr. BENNET, Ms. HASSAN, Mr. HEINRICH, and Mr. KELLY):

S. 2798. A bill to amend the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act to improve compensation for workers involved in uranium mining, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. ERNST:

S. 2799. A bill to eliminate unnecessary spending by Federal agencies, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Ms. DUCKWORTH (for herself, Mr. DURBIN, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mrs. SHAHEEN, and Ms. KLOBUCHAR):

S. 2800. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to support community college and industry partnerships, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Ms. SINEMA (for herself and Mr. LANKFORD):

S. 2801. A bill to amend title 5, United States Code, to improve the effectiveness of major rules in accomplishing their regulatory objectives by promoting retrospective review, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. LEE:

S. 2802. A bill to limit spending from the Highway Trust Fund, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. LEE (for himself, Mr. CRUZ, and Ms. LUMMIS):

S. 2803. A bill to authorize funds for Federal-aid highways, highway safety programs,

and transit programs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. LANKFORD (for himself and Ms. SINEMA):

S. 2804. A bill to require agencies to publish an advance notice of proposed rule-making for major rules; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. SCHUMER (for Mrs. FEINSTEIN):

S. 2805. A bill to revise laws regarding liability in certain civil actions, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. SCHUMER (for Mrs. FEINSTEIN (for herself, Mr. PADILLA, and Mr. WYDEN)):

S. 2806. A bill to direct the Secretary of Agriculture to select and implement landscape-scale forest restoration projects, to assist communities in increasing their resilience to wildfire, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. WYDEN:

S. 2807. A bill to authorize the Secretary of the Interior, in coordination with the heads of relevant Federal agencies, to carry out watershed pilots, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mrs. FEINSTEIN):

S. 2808. A bill to provide compensation for United States victims of Libyan state-sponsored terrorism, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. SCOTT of Florida (for himself, Mr. TOOMEY, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. BRAUN, Mr. HAGERTY, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. CRAMER, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. HOEVEN, and Mr. INHOFE):

S. 2809. A bill to protect social security benefits and military pay and require that the United States Government to prioritize all obligations on the debt held by the public in the event that the debt limit is reached; placed on the calendar.

By Mr. BLUNT (for himself and Mr. BROWN):

S.J. Res. 26. A joint resolution to provide for the appointment of Ulysses S. Grant to the grade of General of the Armies of the United States; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

### SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Ms. ROSEN (for herself and Mrs. BLACKBURN):

S. Res. 377. A resolution urging the European Union to designate Hizballah in its entirety as a terrorist organization; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. KING, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. RISCH, Mr. PADILLA, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. COONS, Mr. WYDEN, and Mrs. CAPITO):

S. Res. 378. A resolution designating September 2021 as "National Prostate Cancer Awareness Month"; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. CARDIN (for himself, Mr. PAUL, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. RISCH, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Mr. WICKER, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. CARPER, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. KING, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr.

COONS, Ms. COLLINS, Ms. SMITH, Mr. YOUNG, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. WARNOCK, Mr. HOEVEN, Ms. CANTWELL, Ms. ERNST, Mr. LUJÁN, Mr. RUBIO, Ms. ROSEN, Mr. CASSIDY, Ms. HIRONO, Mrs. HYDE-SMITH, Mr. PETERS, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. MARSHALL, Mr. LANKFORD, Mr. ROMNEY, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. BRAUN, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. DAINES, Mr. HAWLEY, Mrs. FISCHER, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. REED, Mr. HICKENLOOPER, and Mr. SCOTT of Florida):

S. Res. 379. A resolution expressing support for the designation of the week of September 13, 2021, through September 17, 2021, as “National Small Business Week” to celebrate the contributions of small businesses and entrepreneurs in every community in the United States; considered and agreed to.

#### ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 535

At the request of Ms. ERNST, the name of the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 535, a bill to authorize the location of a memorial on the National Mall to commemorate and honor the members of the Armed Forces that served on active duty in support of the Global War on Terrorism, and for other purposes.

S. 563

At the request of Mr. CRAMER, the name of the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 563, a bill to amend the Federal Reserve Act to prohibit certain financial service providers who deny fair access to financial services from using taxpayer funded discount window lending programs, and for other purposes.

S. 618

At the request of Mr. LANKFORD, the name of the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. HOEVEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 618, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to modify and extend the deduction for charitable contributions for individuals not itemizing deductions.

S. 624

At the request of Ms. ROSEN, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. HICKENLOOPER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 624, a bill to amend the Mineral Leasing Act to increase certain royalty rates, minimum bid amounts, and rental rates, and for other purposes.

S. 1089

At the request of Mrs. BLACKBURN, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. WARNOCK) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1089, a bill to direct the Government Accountability Office to evaluate appropriate coverage of assistive technologies provided to patients who experience amputation or live with limb difference.

S. 1125

At the request of Ms. STABENOW, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1125, a bill to recommend that the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Innovation test the effect of a dementia care management model, and for other purposes.

S. 1385

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1385, a bill to amend the Animal Welfare Act to establish additional requirements for dealers, and for other purposes.

S. 1806

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the names of the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) and the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) were added as cosponsors of S. 1806, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend tax incentives for biodiesel and renewable diesel.

S. 1810

At the request of Ms. KLOBUCHAR, the names of the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. CRAMER) and the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. SMITH) were added as cosponsors of S. 1810, a bill to provide incentives to physicians to practice in rural and medically underserved communities, and for other purposes.

S. 1813

At the request of Mr. COONS, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1813, a bill to direct the Secretary of Health and Human Services to support research on, and expanded access to, investigational drugs for amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, and for other purposes.

S. 1841

At the request of Ms. SMITH, the name of the Senator from California (Mr. PADILLA) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1841, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to revise and extend projects relating to children and to provide access to school-based comprehensive mental health programs.

S. 1872

At the request of Ms. ERNST, the names of the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER), the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN), the Senator from Nevada (Ms. CORTEZ MASTO), the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. HEINRICH) and the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. KENNEDY) were added as cosponsors of S. 1872, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal, collectively, to the United States Army Rangers Veterans of World War II in recognition of their extraordinary service during World War II.

S. 1873

At the request of Mr. CRAPO, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mrs. HYDE-SMITH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1873, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for Medicare coverage of multicancer early detection screening tests.

S. 2005

At the request of Mr. BOOZMAN, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2005, a bill to amend the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act to require alternative options for summer food service program delivery.

S. 2047

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from Nevada (Ms. ROSEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2047, a bill to ban the use of intentionally added perfluoroalkyl or polyfluoroalkyl substances in cosmetics.

S. 2091

At the request of Ms. SINEMA, the names of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. SMITH), the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR), the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY), the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. LUJÁN), the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY), the Senator from Illinois (Ms. DUCKWORTH), the Senator from Virginia (Mr. Kaine), the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND), the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN), the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER), the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE), the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WARNER), the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN), the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. HASSAN), the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS), the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN), the Senator from Nevada (Ms. CORTEZ MASTO), the Senator from California (Mr. PADILLA), the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. REED), the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY), the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET), the Senator from Delaware (Mr. CARPER), the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS), the Senator from Colorado (Mr. HICKENLOOPER) and the Senator from Washington (Ms. CANTWELL) were added as cosponsors of S. 2091, a bill to amend the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 to increase appropriations to Restaurant Revitalization Fund, and for other purposes.

S. 2102

At the request of Mr. BOOZMAN, the names of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER) and the Senator from Nevada (Ms. ROSEN) were added as cosponsors of S. 2102, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to direct the Under Secretary for Health of the Department of Veterans Affairs to provide mammography screening for veterans who served in locations associated with toxic exposure.

S. 2516

At the request of Mr. BARRASSO, the name of the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. HAGERTY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2516, a bill to prohibit the United States International Development Finance Corporation from imposing restrictions on the source of energy used by power-generation projects intended to provide affordable electricity in IDA-eligible countries or IDA-blend countries and to require the Corporation to promote a technology- and fuel-neutral, all-of-the-above energy development strategy for such countries.

S. 2571

At the request of Mr. PETERS, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER) was added as a cosponsor

of S. 2571, a bill to provide for the inclusion on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall of the names of the soldiers who died on Flying Tiger Flight 739 on March 16, 1962.

S. 2615

At the request of Mr. OSSOFF, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. REED) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2615, a bill protecting the right to vote in elections for Federal office, and for other purposes.

S. 2721

At the request of Mr. CRAPO, the names of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MARSHALL) and the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE) were added as cosponsors of S. 2721, a bill to require the Internal Revenue Service to issue a report on the tax gap, to establish a fellowship program within the Internal Revenue Service to recruit mid-career tax professionals to create and participate in an audit task force, and for other purposes.

S. 2727

At the request of Mr. LANKFORD, the name of the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. BARRASSO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2727, a bill to provide for a period of continuing appropriations in the event of a lapse in appropriations under the normal appropriations process, and establish procedures and consequences in the event of a failure to enact appropriations.

S. 2728

At the request of Mr. SULLIVAN, the name of the Senator from Nevada (Ms. CORTEZ MASTO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2728, a bill to amend title VI of the Social Security Act to extend the coverage of Coronavirus Relief Fund payments to Tribal Governments.

S. 2760

At the request of Mr. PORTMAN, the names of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY), the Senator from Iowa (Ms. ERNST), the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. BARRASSO) and the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER) were added as cosponsors of S. 2760, a bill to amend title 31, United States Code, to provide for automatic continuing resolutions.

S. 2780

At the request of Mr. MARSHALL, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. JOHNSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2780, a bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to prohibit certain adverse personnel actions taken against members of the Armed Forces based on declining the COVID-19 vaccine.

S. 2785

At the request of Mr. LEE, the name of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2785, a bill to prohibit the use of Federal funds for gender transition in minors.

S. RES. 338

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) was added as a cosponsor

of S. Res. 338, a resolution designating September 2021 as National Democracy Month as a time to reflect on the contributions of the system of government of the United States to a more free and stable world.

S. RES. 364

At the request of Ms. STABENOW, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 364, a resolution supporting the designation of September 17, 2021, as "National Physician Suicide Awareness Day" to raise awareness of, and promote a national discussion about, physician suicide and to reduce the stigma of mental health issues.

## STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTION

By Mr. SCHUMER (for Mrs. FEINSTEIN):

S. 2805. A bill to revise laws regarding liability in certain civil actions, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President. I rise today to introduce the "Small Passenger Vessel Liability Fairness Act of 2021."

This bill would help the families of 34 people who were tragically killed in the *Conception* boat fire off the coast of Santa Cruz Island, California on September 2, 2019, and other victims and their families of similar tragedies. This was the worst maritime disaster in modern California history, and my thoughts continue to be with the victims and their loved ones.

In December of last year, my bill, the Small Passenger Vessel Safety Act, passed as part of the annual National Defense Authorization Act. It goes a long way toward improving passenger vessel safety, but the families of the victims are still unable to seek compensation for the great loss of life they have suffered.

The victims of the *Conception* boat fire were killed when a fire started on-board the boat, while passengers and crewmembers were sleeping below deck after a nighttime swim.

The National Transportation Safety Board's final investigation report for the fire indicates that the victims were awake and trying to escape before they were overcome with smoke. Both exits from the bunkroom were blocked by flames, and coroner reports list smoke inhalation as the cause of death for all passengers.

The same NTSB investigation also determined that the owner and operator of the boat was at fault for failing to provide effective safety oversight. There was no roving watchman as required, the emergency procedures were not properly followed, and the Coast Guard failed to enforce safety requirements.

The families of the victims of the *Conception* boat fire have filed claims

against the owners of the boat for violating federal safety rules. However, due to an outdated maritime liability law, The Limitation of Liability Act of 1851, the owner of the vessel may not be financially liable for any of the losses incurred as a result of the fire, including the enormous loss of life. My bill would address this issue.

How the bill would help:

My bill would amend the outdated law to allow families of victims to bring claims against owners of small passenger vessels found to be liable for maritime accidents such as the *Conception* boat fire, and receive proper compensation for their suffering. It would require small passenger vessels to be governed by liability laws that allow for victims to receive compensation.

I am very appreciative of the NTSB and Board Member Jennifer Homendy and the Coast Guard's responsiveness to several safety recommendations issued by the NTSB, and for their feedback on this bill. I am especially appreciative to the families of the *Conception* boat fire victims for bringing this issue to my attention, and for their tireless efforts to improve maritime safety and ensure just compensation for future victims.

This bill would provide a long overdue update to an outdated law. It is critical that Congress pass it in a timely manner, so as to ensure families of the 34 victims may have their day in court and that future victims of similar tragedies can also seek justice.

Thank you, Mr. President. I yield the floor.

By Mr. SCOTT of Florida (for himself, Mr. TOOMEY, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. BRAUN, Mr. HAGERTY, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. CRAMER, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. HOEVEN, and Mr. INHOFE):

S. 2809. A bill to protect social security benefits and military pay and require that the United States Government to prioritize all obligations on the debt held by the public in the event that the debt limit is reached; placed on the calendar.

Mr. SCOTT of Florida. Mr. President, currently, America's debt is barreling toward \$30 trillion. This \$30 trillion is hard to imagine. So think about it this way: That is more than \$233,000 of debt for every American family.

On July 31, the suspension on the Federal debt limit expired, and now the Democrats in Congress, who continue to pursue a purely partisan, reckless tax-and-spending spree, are pushing this as a decision point with only two options: to vote to suspend the debt limit or increase it with no reforms to control excess Federal spending. They want us to write the government a blank check to spend more money that we don't have. The Republicans have been clear: We will not do it.

Now, my Democratic colleagues will say that the debt ceiling shouldn't be a partisan issue, and I completely agree,

but what we have seen from the Democrats this year has been purely partisan even by Washington's broken standards.

First, they passed a nearly \$2 trillion so-called COVID bill that spent less than 10 percent of its funding on actually fighting COVID, without any Republican votes, and now they are pushing forward a \$5.5 trillion reckless tax-and-spending spree—again, without a single Republican vote. This insane Democratic spending means we are on the dangerous path of reaching \$45 trillion in Federal debt by 2031. That is not my number. That is what the Democrats' own bill says. The Democrats' own projections have their reckless spending taking the U.S. debt to \$45 trillion in the next 10 years.

There are major consequences to this financial irresponsibility. Like any borrower, the Federal Government pays interest on its debt. When you rack up nearly \$30 trillion in debt, that means hundreds of billions of dollars in interest. Who pays for it? The taxpayers. Right now, even with interest rates at historic lows, the U.S. Government is already spending nearly \$345 billion yearly on interest. Instead of funding important infrastructure, defense, or the environment, nearly \$345 billion in hard-earned tax dollars is just paying interest which provides zero return for American families. Just imagine how much that will grow when the U.S. reaches \$45 trillion in debt. And when interest rates return to normal levels, things will get even worse. Let's look at this.

Right now, about 11 percent of what we are going to collect this year will go to pay the interest. There is no return for taxpayers on this interest. Let's look at what is going to happen by 2031, and this is the Democrats' budget: 23 percent of total Federal receipts will go toward paying the interest. Now, that is assuming that interest rates stay low. Why would we believe that interest rates are going to stay low? Let's just look. We are having unbelievable inflation right now. When inflation goes up, interest rates typically follow. Assuming we have low interest rates stay low, like the Democrats do, we could be spending over \$1 trillion on just interest by 2031. Imagine, if interest rates return to historical averages, our payments will be astronomical. The Federal Government brings in less than \$4 trillion in revenues. So we will be spending roughly a quarter of all tax revenue on interest that does nothing—nothing—for taxpayers.

How can Congress justify that?

It is clear: Democratic spending has caused this massive Democratic debt, and it is time for liberals in Washington to own the debt crisis they have created.

Republicans have been clear: We won't stand for it. We won't vote to bail out the Democrats' out-of-control spending. We won't cut radical liberals in Congress more blank checks to bury our country in more debt, to drive up

America's interest expense, and to fuel an already raging inflation crisis, hurting families across my State and across this country.

Just last week, the Bureau of Labor Statistics reported that the Consumer Price Index was up 5.3 percent in 1 year—from August to August, 5.3 percent. Year-over-year comparisons show that inflation has gone up each month of Biden's Presidency. Government doesn't feel the Biden inflation, but everyday Americans do.

I am hearing from families all across my State—a father of three in Jacksonville, a mother of four in Wauchula—and small businesses in Miami. Another family in Kissimmee told us about how hard it is to keep food on the table because everything is getting so expensive. They are having trouble keeping their car because of the cost of maintenance and gas. Of course, without a car, they won't have a way to get to work and provide for their family.

It is heartbreaking to hear these stories. I can relate to this. I grew up in a poor family. My mom would take in ironing for extra money. She would give us exact change to go to the grocery store, and if the price of something went up, we just simply couldn't get it.

In the face of this hardship felt by so many families in Florida and across this great Nation, President Biden and Democrats here in Congress have zero interest in reducing the national debt and cutting their insane spending. Democrats have shown a heartless disregard for the struggles so many families in Florida and across America are dealing with right now.

It is time we bring accountability to Federal spending. Unlike our Democratic colleagues, Republicans have a solution-focused approach to fixing America's debt crisis. We know that the Federal Government can and must pursue practical measures to make it easy and relatively painless to cut spending. We can start that right now.

Earlier this year, I introduced the Federal Debt Emergency Control Act, which prevents Washington from mindlessly spending by requiring that two-thirds of the Senate vote to increase the debt before approving any bill with deficit spending, terminating any unobligated funding from the stimulus bills and sending it back to the Treasury General Fund for deficit reduction, and fast-tracking any bill reducing the debt by at least 5 percent over 10 years.

Today, I am joining my friend Senator PAT TOOMEY to reintroduce the Full Faith and Credit Act. This bill ensures that the U.S. Government does not default on its debt while also prioritizing certain payments to our seniors, military, and veterans.

It is commonsense policy like this that will move the United States forward and out of the massive debt crisis we are clearly already in. I welcome all fiscally responsible colleagues to join me to say: We don't accept the status

quo. We won't watch in silence as Democrats try to spend us into oblivion. We can get spending under control.

While I was Governor of Florida, we paid down one-third of State debt by living within our means, all while cutting taxes. We can do it here. We have to start acting responsibly, and the time to do that is now.

Politicians in Washington want you to think this is so complicated. They want you to think that dysfunction is inevitable. That is a lie. It is a lie that a broken system and failed politicians up here have been telling you for decades, and it is time for that to end.

Getting America back on track is simple. It starts with passing commonsense reforms that rein in reckless spending, stop Congress from getting paid when it shuts down the government, and force Congress to stay in session until it passes a balanced budget. We keep our Nation on the right financial path by making sure Congress is constantly held accountable for its spending of taxpayer money. It is taxpayer money, every dollar of it.

It is time to stand up for those on fixed incomes and, of course, families whose income can't keep up with inflation. It is time to stand up for our grandkids, whose futures are being mortgaged by out-of-control Washington spending.

This isn't political. It is good government, and it is common sense. The longer we ignore the debt problem, the worse it will become not just for us but for future generations.

A debt crisis is here today. It will be American families who feel the effects of their government's lack of fiscal responsibility through inflation, higher costs, and rising taxes. That is not the America anyone wants. American families deserve better. Through smart legislation and responsible choices, we can be truly accountable to the American people and bring some stability back to the Federal Government's bank account.

#### SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

#### SENATE RESOLUTION 377—URGING THE EUROPEAN UNION TO DESIGNATE HIZBALLAH IN ITS ENTIRETY AS A TERRORIST ORGANIZATION

Ms. ROSEN (for herself and Mrs. BLACKBURN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 377

Whereas, in April 1983, a Hizballah terror attack against the United States Embassy in Beirut killed 63 people;

Whereas, in October 1983, a Hizballah terror attack against the United States and French barracks of the Multinational Force in Lebanon killed 241 American and 58 French soldiers;

Whereas, in July 2012, a Hizballah terror attack, carried out by an operative with French citizenship, in Burgas, Bulgaria, killed 5 Israeli tourists and 1 Bulgarian;

Whereas, in March 2013, a Swedish-Lebanese Hizballah operative in Cyprus was convicted of planning terror attacks against Israeli tourists;

Whereas, in June 2015, a Hizballah operative was sentenced to 6 years in prison after he stockpiled more than 8 tons of ammonium nitrate in Cyprus;

Whereas, in December 2015, the Hizballah International Financing Prevention Act of 2015 (Public Law 114-102) was signed into law in the United States, broadening financial sector sanctions against Hizballah to compel foreign financial institutions to refrain from supporting the terrorist group;

Whereas, in May 2018, the Department of the Treasury imposed sanctions on Mohammad Ibrahim Bazzi, a Hizballah financier, and blacklisted 5 of his companies, including Belgian energy services conglomerate Global Trading Group;

Whereas, in October 2018, French police raided the Islamic Zahra Centre on suspicion of supporting Hizballah, freezing the organization's funds, and seizing illegal weapons;

Whereas, in September 2020, 4 former leaders of the Zahra Centre were arrested on suspicion of continuing to run the association;

Whereas, in July 2019, the Department of the Treasury listed 2 Hizballah-backed members of Lebanese Parliament, Amin Sherri and Mohammad Raad, to the terror blacklist, stating that Hizballah uses its parliamentary power to advance its violent activities;

Whereas, in April 2020, Germany investigated over 1,050 people with suspected links to Hizballah;

Whereas Europol's June 2020 European Union Terrorism Situation and Trend Report outlined that Hizballah is "suspected of trafficking diamonds and drugs and of money laundering via the trade in second-hand cars", and the report also stated that "investigations face the difficulty of demonstrating that the funds collected are channeled to the military wing of the organization";

Whereas United States-led Operations Cassandra and Cedar exposed the criminal-business wing of Hizballah via the External Security Organization Business Affairs Component (BAC);

Whereas, during Operation Cassandra, Hizballah elements involved in drug trafficking were arrested in the United States, South America, and several European countries, including France, Belgium, Germany, and Italy;

Whereas Hizballah's criminal activity in Europe is run by the BAC, which reports to the External Security Organisation, a.k.a. Unit 910, or the Islamic Jihad Organization (IJO), and Abdallah Safieddine, Hizballah's representative in Iran, is also involved in this activity;

Whereas, in August 2020, United Nations Secretary General Guterres called on Lebanon to disarm Hizballah, citing the terror group's persistent violation of Resolution 1701 (2006);

Whereas Iran is the prime sponsor of Hizballah, harboring, financing, training, and arming the group;

Whereas the Department of the Treasury and Department of State estimate that Iran provides as much as \$700,000,000 per year to Hizballah in the form of financial and logistical support, weapons, and training;

Whereas Hizballah now has an arsenal of approximately 150,000 missiles and rockets, many of which can reach deep into Israel;

Whereas Hizballah fighters have been supporting the Assad regime in Syria, often leading operations in the conflict which has left more than 500,000 dead;

Whereas Hizballah's destabilizing actions in Syria has fueled a migrant crisis that has brought over 700,000 refugees to Europe;

Whereas Hizballah trains and provides weapons for Shiite militias in Iraq and Yemen, further destabilizing the region and perpetuating violence in those countries;

Whereas Hizballah activities continue to plague Lebanon with profound economic and political instability and violence;

Whereas, in August 2020, 200 Lebanese people died when a massive stockpile of ammonium nitrate exploded in Beirut's port;

Whereas the Lebanese Armed Forces, the legitimate security establishment of the country as outlined in United Nations Security Council Resolution 1701 (2006), are struggling to control the flow of weapons and Hizballah fighters at Lebanon's borders;

Whereas, in October 2012, Hizballah Deputy Secretary General Naim Qassem stated that "[Hizballah does not] have a military wing and a political one . . . Every element of Hizballah, from commanders to members as well as our various capabilities, are in the service of the resistance";

Whereas, as of September 2021, the United States, Germany, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Slovenia, Serbia, and Kosovo have designated Hizballah in its entirety as a terror organization;

Whereas, in March 2016, the Gulf Cooperation Council, the bloc of 6 Gulf Arab nations, formally branded Hizballah, in its entirety, a terrorist organization, and the League of Arab States shortly thereafter adopted the same designation;

Whereas the Department of the Treasury has diligently added persons and entities to the list of Specially Designated Global Terrorists who have provided material support to the Hizballah terrorist organization, thereby hampering its financing and logistical capabilities;

Whereas the European Union, in July 2013, designated Hizballah's so-called "military wing", but not the organization as a whole, as a terrorist organization;

Whereas, despite restrictions put on Hizballah since the designation of its military wing, the group continues to conduct illicit narcotrafficking, money laundering, and weapons trafficking throughout Europe and the world;

Whereas, in September 2021, the European Parliament passed a resolution on the situation in Lebanon stating that "whereas Hezbollah has repeatedly shown its strong ideological allegiance with Iran, which is destabilising the Lebanese Government and undermining its much-needed cohesion"; and

Whereas the Senate has previously called on the European Union to fully designate Hizballah as a terrorist organization, agreeing to Senate Resolution 482 in July 2016: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the Senate—

(1) applauds and expresses support for the continued, increased cooperation between the United States and the European Union in thwarting Hizballah's criminal and terrorist activities;

(2) supports transcontinental efforts within Europe to share intelligence information among police and security services to facilitate greater cooperation in tracking, apprehending, and prosecuting terrorists, foreign fighters, and potential offenders;

(3) encourages the European Union to implement sanctions against Hizballah-affiliated terrorists in tandem with the United States;

(4) recommends greater civil society engagement in both the United States and Europe to underscore Hizballah's malign regional influence; and

(5) urges the European Union to designate Hizballah in its entirety as a terrorist organization and increase pressure on the group, including through—

(A) facilitating better cross-border cooperation between European Union members in combating Hizballah;

(B) issuing arrest warrants against members and active supporters of Hizballah;

(C) freezing Hizballah's assets in Europe, including those masquerading as charities; and

(D) prohibiting fundraising activities in support of Hizballah.

## SENATE RESOLUTION 378—DESIGNATING SEPTEMBER 2021 AS "NATIONAL PROSTATE CANCER AWARENESS MONTH"

Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. KING, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. RISCH, Mr. PADILLA, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. COONS, Mr. WYDEN, and Mrs. CAPRTO) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

### S. RES. 378

Whereas more than 3,100,000 men in the United States are living with prostate cancer;

Whereas 1 in 8 men in the United States will be diagnosed with prostate cancer in their lifetimes and 1 in 41 men in the United States will die from prostate cancer;

Whereas prostate cancer is the most commonly diagnosed non-skin cancer and the second-leading cause of cancer-related deaths among men in the United States;

Whereas the American Cancer Society estimates that, in 2021, 248,530 men will be diagnosed with, and more than 34,130 men will die of, prostate cancer;

Whereas 40 percent of newly diagnosed prostate cancer cases occur in men under the age of 65;

Whereas the odds of developing prostate cancer rise rapidly after age 50;

Whereas African-American men suffer from a prostate cancer incidence rate that is significantly higher than that of White men and have more than double the prostate cancer mortality rate than that of White men;

Whereas having a father or brother with prostate cancer more than doubles the risk of a man developing prostate cancer, with a higher risk for men who have a brother with the disease and the highest risk for men with several affected relatives;

Whereas screening by a digital rectal examination and a prostate-specific antigen blood test can detect the disease at the earlier, more treatable stages, which could increase the chances of survival for more than 5 years to nearly 100 percent;

Whereas only 30 percent of men survive more than 5 years if diagnosed with prostate cancer after the cancer has metastasized;

Whereas there are typically no noticeable symptoms of prostate cancer in the early stages, making appropriate screening critical;

Whereas, in fiscal year 2021, the Director of the National Institutes of Health will support approximately \$256,000,000 in research projects focused specifically on prostate cancer;

Whereas, in fiscal year 2021, Congress appropriated \$110,000,000 for the Prostate Cancer Research Program of the Department of Defense;

Whereas the Department of Veterans Affairs has established 20 Precision Oncology

Centers of Excellence in order to deliver precision oncology services to veterans suffering from prostate cancer;

Whereas ongoing research promises further improvements in prostate cancer prevention, early detection, and treatment; and

Whereas educating people in the United States, including health care providers, about prostate cancer and early detection strategies is crucial to saving the lives of men and preserving and protecting families: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the Senate—

(1) designates September 2021 as “National Prostate Cancer Awareness Month”;

(2) declares that steps should be taken—

(A) to raise awareness about the importance of screening methods for, and treatment of, prostate cancer;

(B) to encourage research—

(i) to improve screening and treatment for prostate cancer;

(ii) to discover the causes of prostate cancer; and

(iii) to develop a cure for prostate cancer; and

(C) to continue to consider ways to improve access to, and the quality of, health care services for detecting and treating prostate cancer; and

(3) calls on the people of the United States, interest groups, and affected persons—

(A) to promote awareness of prostate cancer;

(B) to take an active role in the fight to end the devastating effects of prostate cancer on individuals, families, and the economy; and

(C) to observe National Prostate Cancer Awareness Month with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

#### SENATE RESOLUTION 379— OFFICIAL TITLE NOT AVAILABLE

Mr. DURBIN submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

##### S. RES. 379

Whereas a “National Small Business Week” has been declared by every President since 1963;

Whereas there are more than 30,000,000 small businesses in the United States that support more than 60,000,000 jobs;

Whereas thousands of small business establishments have been particularly hard hit by the COVID-19 pandemic and government lockdowns;

Whereas small businesses will play an integral role in rebuilding the economy of the United States; and

Whereas September 13, 2021, through September 17, 2021, would be an appropriate week to celebrate “National Small Business Week”: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the Senate—

(1) honors and celebrates the entrepreneurial spirit and contributions of small businesses in every community in the United States;

(2) applauds the efforts and achievements of the owners of small businesses and their employees in every community of the United States;

(3) recognizes that in the face of significant challenges, the owners of small businesses have demonstrated incredible resilience over the past 18 months;

(4) supports the designation of “National Small Business Week”;

(5) acknowledges the importance of providing access to underserved firms; and

(6) supports efforts to—

(A) hold Federal agencies accountable for fraud, waste, and abuse of taxpayer dollars; and

(B) create an environment that enables small businesses to grow and create jobs.

#### MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME EN BLOC—S. 2809 AND H.R. 5305

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I understand there are two bills at the desk, and I ask for their first reading en bloc.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the bills by title for the first time en bloc.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2809) to protect social security benefits and military pay and require that the United States Government to prioritize all obligations on the debt held by the public in the event that the debt limit is reached.

A bill (H.R. 5305) making continuing appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2022, and for providing emergency assistance, and for other purposes.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I now ask for a second reading, and I object to my own request, all en bloc.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The bills will receive their second reading on the next legislative day.

#### ADJOURNMENT UNTIL WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 2021, AT 8:22 P.M.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I move to adjourn until 8:22 p.m. today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion to adjourn until 8:22 p.m.

The motion was agreed to.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 8:20 p.m., adjourned until Wednesday, September 22, 2021, at 8:22 p.m.

#### SENATE

##### WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 2021

The Senate met at 8:22 p.m. and was called to order by the Honorable MARK KELLY, a Senator from the State of Arizona.

#### APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,  
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,  
Washington, DC, September 22, 2021.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable MARK KELLY, a Senator from the State of Arizona, to perform the duties of the Chair.

PATRICK J. LEAHY,  
President pro tempore.

Mr. KELLY thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority whip.

#### ORDERS FOR WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 2021

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, and the Senate be in a period of morning business with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate resumed morning business.

#### MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR EN BLOC

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I understand there are four bills at the desk due for a second reading en bloc.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator is correct.

The clerk will read the bills by title for the second time en bloc.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2788) to reauthorize the National Flood Insurance Program.

A bill (S. 2789) making continuing appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2022, and for providing emergency assistance, and for other purposes.

A bill (S. 2809) to protect social security benefits and military pay and require that the United States Government to prioritize all obligations on the debt held by the public in the event that the debt limit is reached.

A bill (H.R. 5305) making continuing appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2022, and for providing emergency assistance, and for other purposes.

Mr. DURBIN. In order to place the bills on the calendar under the provisions of rule XIV, I will object to further proceeding en bloc.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Objection having been heard, the bills will be placed on the calendar.

#### EXECUTIVE SESSION

#### EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the Senate proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 174.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Ronald L. Davis, of California, to be Director of the United States Marshals Service.

Thereupon, the Senate proceeded to consider the nomination.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Davis nomination?

The nomination was confirmed.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, all without intervening action or debate; that no further motions be in order to the nomination; that any statements related to the nomination be printed in the RECORD; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action and the Senate resume legislative session.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senate will now resume legislative session.

#### HONORING MISSOURIANS WHO MADE THE ULTIMATE SACRIFICE IN AFGHANISTAN

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Armed Services be discharged from further consideration and the Senate now proceed to S. Res. 357.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 357) honoring Missourians who made the ultimate sacrifice in Afghanistan.

There being no objection, the committee was discharged and the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. DURBIN. I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 357) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in the RECORD of September 14, 2021, under "Submitted Resolutions.")

#### NATIONAL PROSTATE CANCER AWARENESS MONTH

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 378 submitted earlier today.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 378) designating September 2021 as "National Prostate Cancer Awareness Month".

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I know of no further debate on the resolution.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there further debate?

If not, the question is on agreeing to the resolution.

The resolution (S. Res. 378) was agreed to.

Mr. DURBIN. I ask unanimous consent that the preamble be agreed to and that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD for the legislative day of September 21, 2021, under "Submitted Resolutions.")

#### EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR THE DESIGNATION OF THE WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 13, 2021, THROUGH SEPTEMBER 17, 2021, AS "NATIONAL SMALL BUSINESS WEEK" TO CELEBRATE THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF SMALL BUSINESSES AND ENTREPRENEURS IN EVERY COMMUNITY IN THE UNITED STATES

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. Res. 379, submitted earlier today.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 379) expressing support for the designation of the week of September 13, 2021, through September 17, 2021, as "National Small Business Week" to celebrate the contributions of small businesses and entrepreneurs in every community in the United States.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I further ask that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 379) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD for the legislative day of September 21, 2021, under "Submitted Resolutions.")

#### ORDERS FOR THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 23, 2021

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 9 a.m., Thursday, September 23; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, and morning business be closed; that upon conclusion of morning business, the Senate proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the Pan nomination; further, that all time on the Pan nomination expire at 10 a.m.; finally, that if any nominations are confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 9 A.M. TOMORROW

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 8:28 p.m., adjourned until Thursday, September 23, 2021, at 9 a.m.

#### CONFIRMATIONS

Executive nominations confirmed by the Senate September 22, 2021:

##### DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

LILY LAWRENCE BATCHELDER, OF MASSACHUSETTS, TO BE AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY.

##### DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

RONALD L. DAVIS, OF CALIFORNIA, TO BE DIRECTOR OF THE UNITED STATES MARSHALS SERVICE.

##### EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

JAYME RAY WHITE, OF WASHINGTON, TO BE A DEPUTY UNITED STATES TRADE REPRESENTATIVE (WESTERN HEMISPHERE, EUROPE, THE MIDDLE EAST, LABOR, AND ENVIRONMENT), WITH THE RANK OF AMBASSADOR.